ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, TEACHER WARMTH, TEACHER PRACTICES, AND MOTIVATION ON SELECTED SCHOOL OUTCOMES

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation on selected school outcomes such as student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance. The study participants are 150 fourth grade students attending a selected elementary school. The design of this study is ex post facto research design. The data for this study was collected using a self administered questionnaire.

The four statistical tests performed and analyzed are: Pearson Correlation, T- test, Factor analysis, and Regression analysis. The results of the Pearson Correlation indicate a significant relationship at the .05 level between student academic achievement (dependent variable) and the four independent variables: perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation. There is a

corresponding significant correlation between the dependent variable: student attendance and the four independent variables: perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation. The third dependent variable, student behavior, has a significant correlation at the .05 level only with perceived parental involvement.

The results of the T-test show no significant difference in male and female students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation. However, there is a significant difference at the .05 level in the perceived parental involvement of students who participate in free or reduced breakfast/lunch and those who do not participate. The results of the Factor analysis indicate that the following variables are loaded in component 1: motivation, teacher practices, teacher warmth, parental involvement, and student academic achievement. Student behavior and student attendance are loaded in component 2, while participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast and gender are loaded in component 3. The results of the Regression analysis indicate that parental involvement is the only variable that explains student behavior and student attendance, while both parental involvement and teacher practices explain student academic achievement.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, TEACHER WARMTH, TEACHER PRACTICES, AND MOTIVATION ON SELECTED SCHOOL OUTCOMES

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM OF STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN CONTEXT

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on selected school outcomes such as student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance. The findings will provide additional knowledge regarding variables that influence student learning, behavior and attendance. The National Goals 2000 and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (2004) both emphasize how critical it is for all students to learn and achieve at appropriate levels.

The Problem of Student Academic Achievement, Student Behavior and Student Attendance in a Selected Elementary School

School outcomes such as student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance are problems in the identified elementary school where data was collected for this study. This prompts the need for explanation. The selected elementary school is located in a school district in Metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia. The school serves approximately 800 students. The racial make up of the selected school is 83% black, 7% Hispanic, 5% multi racial, 4% white, and 1% Asian.

Approximately 71% of the students participate in free or reduced lunch. The variations in student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance in the selected school has been an ongoing concern, given the provisions of NCLB which really speaks to leaving no child behind.

The researcher conducted personal interviews (personal communication, January 11, 2008) with the school counselor, some teachers and students at the selected school and identified some issues that contribute to school absenteeism. Some of these issues include:

- Some parents do not value education and as such do not care whether children attend school or not.
- Lack of parental supervision due to mental illness and drug/alcohol abuse.
- Over indulgence of students by parents. Some parents simply allow students to stay home upon slightest excuse. Some parents misplace their priorities and take students on trips/vacation when school is in session.
- Behavior related issues leading to out of school suspensions.
- Students' perceptions that the teachers do not care about them, that the teachers are there just to collect pay checks.

The data in table 1 show variations in student attendance (absences and tardies) and student behavior (number of office referrals) in 2006-2007 school year, in the selected school in comparison to three other schools in the same school district. A comparative analysis of the data in table 1 clearly indicate that the three other schools recorded better student attendance and student behavior. The three

schools were chosen for comparison for good reasons. In the first instance, all the four schools are located in the southern part of the relevant county. Secondly, all the four schools share similar demographics. Given that the three other schools are recording better school outcomes, it becomes necessary to identify the key variables that explain student behavior and attendance in the select school.

Table 1: Student Attendance and Student Behavior Across Four Schools

Schools	Student Attendance % of students with at least one absence/tardy 2006-2007	Student Behavior (Discipline Referrals) # of Referrals 2006-2007
School A (selected school)	79 %	367
School B	10 %	84
School C	12 %	73
School D	14 %	227

The selected school has witnessed significant shifts in student demographics and relatively high teacher turnover due to several reasons. The change in school leadership, the gentrification occurring in inner city of Atlanta, the natural disasters that occurred in various parts of the nation and the depressed economy have all contributed in no small ways to these changes.

The shift in student demographics brought with it changes in student academic achievement, student behaviors and student attendance. It is worth noting that the number of students participating in free and reduced lunch has also increased over the years. The percentage of students on free/reduced lunch was 65%, 69% and 71% respectively in 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school year.

With a change in student demographics, it becomes critical that teacher/student interactions (teacher behaviors/ practices/attitudes) and parental involvement initiatives (based on students' perceptions) shift accordingly to align with the needs of the relevant student population. This requires a paradigm shift from focusing on issues the school and other socializing agents (parents, educators) think may be impacting student outcomes to what the students actually perceive as influencing their respective school outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to examine students' perceptions of teacher warmth, teacher classroom practices, parental participation and motivation in relation to selected student outcomes.

This data is important since students' perceptions are their reality. A determination of the nature of the relationship among parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, student motivation and selected school outcomes will better position the school to identify the best possible ways to improve student academic achievement, behavior and attendance.

The data in table 2 indicate variations (mathematics scores across three grade levels in the 2007-2008 school year) in student academic achievement in the selected school. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) grading scale which reflects 0-24th percentile, 25th –75th percentile, and 76th percentile plus, are aligned respectively, with the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) scale of "did not meet, met, and exceeded."

Table 2: Students' ITBS Mathematics Scores by Grade level

Year 2007-2008	ITBS Math Scores 0-24thPercentile (student %)	ITBS Math Scores 25th-75th Percentile (student %)	ITBS Math Scores 76th Percentile and above (student %)
5th Grade	31 %	57 %	12 %
4th Grade	25 %	65 %	10 %
3rd	29 %	64 %	07 %

Educators and policy makers tend to associate active parental involvement with student academic achievement, behavior and attendance (Henderson, 1987). Some have argued that student academic achievement is impacted by the students' perceptions of teachers' ability to provide warmth and empathy conditions in the classrooms (Robinson, Wilson, and Robinson, 1981). When the students perceive the classroom environment as threatening or unwelcoming, they will not be motivated to participate in the learning process or even attend school. Accordingly, students will desire to attend school when the classroom environment is perceived as nurturing, attracting and inviting.

Regardless of how great or experienced a teacher is, if a student perceives that the teacher does not care about him/her, the student will not desire to attend school, not to speak of being in that teacher's class. When students do not have regular school attendance, they miss out on classroom instructions. When this occurs, student's grades are impacted and student may end up becoming a discipline problem. The vicious cycle continues if not adequately addressed. Students

perceive teachers as authoritative figures and role models, so their behaviors and classroom practices have the potential to enhance or hinder the students' academic progress. As Ginott (1975) said so poignantly:

> I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt, or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanized or de-humanized. (p.13)

There is little or no doubt that the teacher is a very critical variable in the classroom. Hence the high public demand for teachers who can demonstrate excellence in the classroom. Qualified teachers have a significant impact on student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2000). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996), what teachers know and what teachers can do in the classroom have significant influence on what students learn. Effective instructional practices have been positively correlated with higher test scores, engaged behavior, and better school attendance (House, 2002; Downer et al., 2007; Rocks, 1980). As succinctly noted by Byrne (1983):

> In so far as a teacher's knowledge provides the basis for his or her effectiveness, the most relevant knowledge will be that which concerns the particular topic being taught and the relevant pedagogical strategies for teaching it to the particular types of pupils to whom it will be taught. (p.14)

School outcomes such as student academic achievement, behavior and attendance are serious issues and have been sources of great concern at the local,

state and national levels. Cathy Cox, Georgia State Superintendent of Education (2003), emphasize that her target goal is to decrease the number of schools participating in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Initiative, and to significantly increase the reading and writing proficiency of third graders throughout the state. Several variables have been known to negatively impact school outcomes. To ensure that students have successful school outcomes, it is critical that those variables are identified and addressed appropriately. Some of these variables may have their origins in the home, school and/or community. Regardless of the origin of these issues, teachers are expected to engage in practices that positively impact students' behavior. Additionally, teachers are expected to maintain positive student/teacher interactions so that learning will occur.

It is argued that the bulk of student learning occurs in school, so student attendance becomes a critical piece. Cartwright (1993) notes that "several students in urban communities do not come to school because they are at home caring for siblings. This is a very, very common way of life in many urban families." (p. 129).

Previously, student attendance was one of the school outcomes that received minimal attention in relation to students' academic performance (Lamdin,1996). Lamdin (1996) notes that education analysts and policy makers need to consider policies and procedure in relation to school attendance. It is important to mention that Georgia Compulsory Law (O.C.G.A., 20-2-690.1) requires a student between his or her sixth and sixteenth birthdays to attend a public, private or home study program. The legislation goes on to stipulate that the minimum session of annual

attendance required shall be for the full sessions of the school, which the child is eligible to attend. The parent or guardian has the responsibility to see that the student maintains regular school attendance. Penalties are also prescribed for unexcused absences.

The NCLB legislation plays a significant part in bringing student attendance to the forefront by mandating that a school where 15% of any subgroup has 15 or more absences will not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP). Prior to this legislation, some educators relegated attendance to the background, not withstanding the fact that for the most part, students have to be in school to learn. The possibility of not meeting AYP due to poor attendance made such educators to devote more time to attendance. Accordingly, it is critical to identify and implement school/home initiatives or practices that will make schooling attractive/appealing to students. By so doing students will cease to feel that schooling is another thing they are compelled to do. Hence this study seeks to investigate both school and home variables in relation to student outcomes.

Concerns about the status, quality, and equity of education in this country have fueled many educational reform initiatives at the national, state, and local levels. The overarching goal of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2004 (NCLB) is to improve student achievement. Public schools around the nation are required to provide quality education for every student regardless of race, socioeconomic status (SES) or background. The Goals 2000: Education America Act, identifies the formation of partnerships as an important objective for schools, based on the

assumption that school–parent partnership influence students' academic achievements, attitudes, attendance and behaviors.

It is also a concern that millions of students (primarily poor African-American, Asian, Native American, and Hispanic) may not obtain the education necessary for full participation in the economic and civic life of the country. Schools across the country are expected to teach, and students are expected to learn. The question is "is this occurring?" In this day and age, students are graduating from high school without being able to read. Students enter middle school unable to decipher a geography textbook, and leave elementary school without the necessary skills to decode a math problem (Dymock, 1993). The slow decline in students' reading ability is valid (Chall, 1996).

Additionally, an international study indicates that the United States of America (U.S.A) fourth and eight graders exceeded international mathematics average in 2003. The fourth graders performed better than their peers in thirteen of the twenty four countries that participated in the study. However, U.S.A. fourth graders were outperformed by their peers in eleven countries including Belgium-Flemish, Japan, Netherlands, England, Hungary, Russian Federation, and Chinese Taipei. Similarly, the U.S.A. eight graders performed better than their peers in twenty five of the forty four countries that participated in the study. The eight graders were in turn outperformed by their peers in countries such as Korea, Japan, Hungary, Belgium-Flemish, and Netherlands (TIMSS, 2003).

Research studies provide evidence that in the United States, female and minority students have lower achievement in math and take fewer math courses than do male and white students, and that the gender and racial gaps are not narrowing. Problems associated with students' achievement, behavior and attendance appear to be particularly serious in poor urban schools (Hall, Davis, Bolen, & Chia, 1999). This seems to be a real and immediate problem which requires the involvement of parents and other stakeholders.

There is an African quote that one is a sum total of one's experiences, and that one is raised by one's environment. This is validated by Kretovics and Nussel's (1994) position that many students who are products of deplorable communities have difficulty leaving child maltreatment, drug addiction, alcohol addiction, and racism at the schools' door steps. These students carry the extra baggage to school which ultimately impact student outcomes.

Parents are the children's first teachers. Parental involvement as a family educational input has been advocated as a resource for school success. Epstein (1992) points out that students at all grade levels do better academic work and have more positive school attitudes, higher aspirations, good attendance, and other positive behaviors if they have parents who are aware, knowledgeable, encouraging and involved. Research demonstrates that parental involvement in children's education is positively correlated to improved academic achievement (Henderson,1987). Hence, federal, state and local initiatives have renewed emphasis on involving parents as active partners in the education of their children.

Some have argued that schools and parents have different goals for the children (Lightfoot, 1978). However, research has shown that regardless of the difference in parents' educational background, both the more and less educated parents share similar goals with the schools for their children's education (Epstein, 1986). Generally, parents send their children to school with the expectation that they will learn. There is little doubt that some parents do not know the information they need to be effective in schools. Most parents have little or no knowledge of what the teachers are doing in school. Teachers on the other hand, do not understand the parents' goals, and fail to communicate to parents how they can guide and help their children at home. Students on the other hand, want their families to get involved in their education, and be available as helpful sources of information, assistance and guidance (Epstien, 2001). Survey of parents, teachers, principals and students indicate that when schools invest in practices to involve families, parents respond including parents who may not have been involved on their own (Epstein, 1986).

In order to understand the interactive roles of the school, teachers, students, and parents, one must examine the organization chart, and the flow of power and influences. Figure one shows the organizational chart of the relevant school and selected school outcomes under investigation.

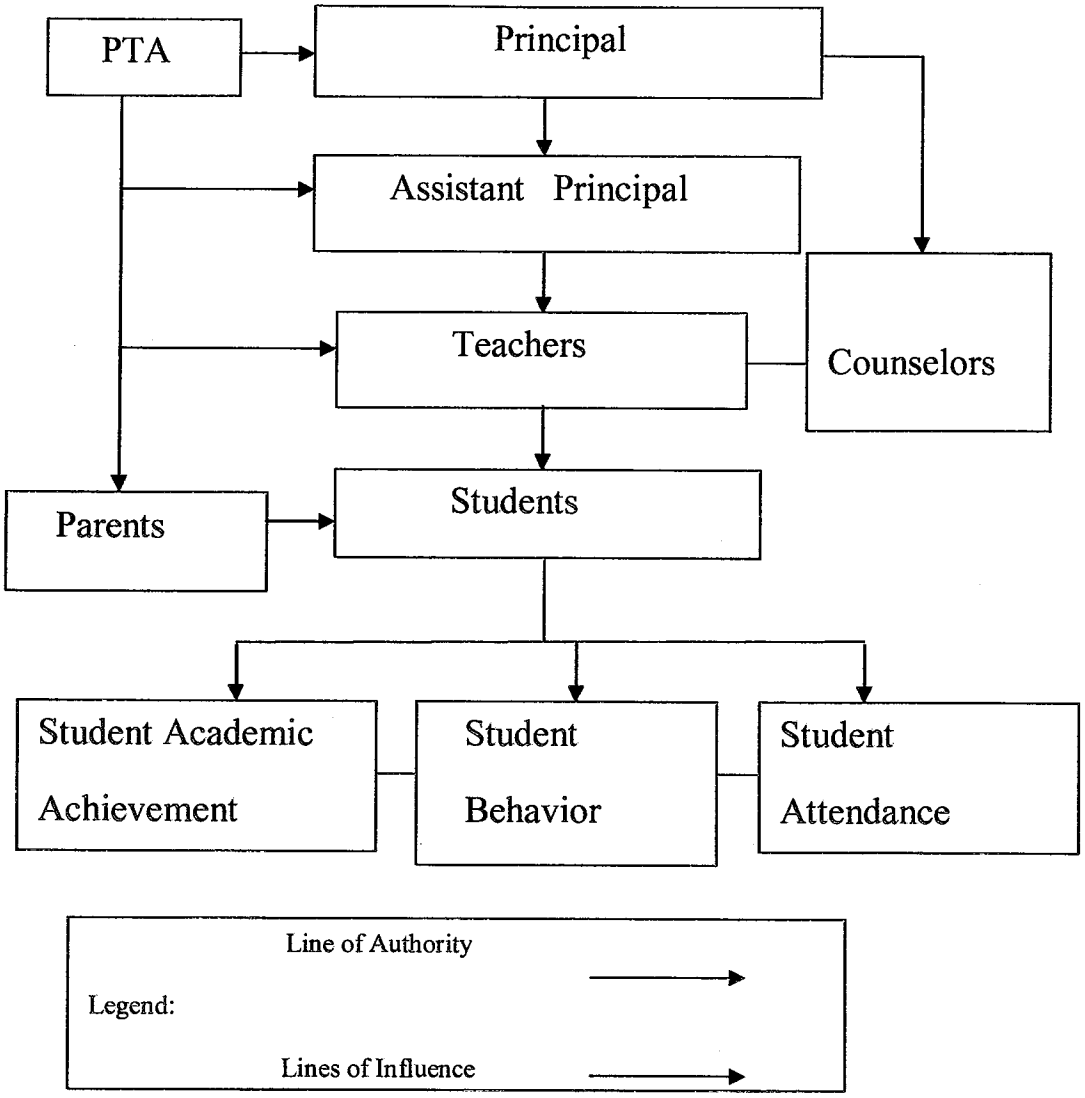

Figure 1: School Organizational Chart and Selected Student Outcomes: Student Academic Achievement, Student Behavior and Student Attendance

The diagram supports the concept of school as a bureaucracy with roles hierarchically aligned. It demonstrates that the principal is the administrator responsible for the overall operation of the school. Accordingly, there is need for the principal and assistant principal to be aware of the dynamics of the classroom variables and to keep that in proper perspective during the teacher evaluation process. Teachers are in the classroom on a daily basis and are perceived by the

students as authority figures. To this end, teachers' behaviors and practices as perceived by students, weigh heavily on student engagement, academic performance, behavior and attendance.

The parents have huge influence on their children and accordingly, it is important that parents partner with the school in the education of their children. To foster positive school climate and student learning, teachers and parents need to communicate effectively and be involved in the decision making process of the school's curriculum and any improvement of the organization. Generally, people perform best in an environment where they are involved in the ongoing improvement of the organization and are committed to its success (Drury, 1999).

The principal provides direct supervision to the assistant principal and school counselor. The principal as the instructional leader of the school is expected to oversee the implementation of the curriculum/instructions and other teacher practices. This responsibility has been delegated for the most part, to the assistant principal who directly assists the teachers in lesson planning, developing strategies for improving student-teacher interactions, managing student behaviors and delivering instructions in the classrooms. Teachers are directly responsible for delivering instructions to the students in the classrooms. Students are supposed to be the primary target in the school and the expectation is for them to learn regardless of race, gender and their social status. Teachers are expected to engage in practices that foster positive environment for student learning to occur. However, some teachers may fail to cultivate an environment conducive to student learning.

A student who perceives the teacher or classroom as a cold, hostile, non supportive, alienating environment may withdraw from classroom activities or studies, and would not be motivated to learn or be successful. If the student is not learning in school, then he or she is not getting anything out of being in school, so there is really no reason to be in school. If such a student is compelled to attend school, he or she may resort to inappropriate behaviors in retaliation.

It is a fact that teachers vary in their experiences and classroom practices. It is also not disputed that students vary in their abilities, experiences, and behaviors which are often conditioned by their respective family learning culture/values, and other family characteristics. The non alignment of the school's role, in relation to efforts to partner with parents, and in relation to what teachers do is critical. Further, what the teachers do in relation to what students do (largely influenced by some school variables, parental involvement and other home variables) could account for the variations in school outcomes. Ultimately, if the precise variables that impact student outcomes are not identified, it will be difficult to align the various roles to positively impact student outcomes.

The red lines are used to denote the interaction or partnership between the parents and teachers, and between the parents (as represented by the parent teacher association) and the management of the school (principal/assistant principal). Although the parents are outside the classroom, their active involvement both in the school and outside the school could impact what occurs the classroom. Parental involvement could cause a shift in a teacher's perception of a student which will

change the manner in which the teacher interacts with the student. If the management of the school and the teachers fail to refine their approach toward engaging parents in the education of their children, then poor parental involvement could impact student achievement. Therefore, it is critical to include parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation in the study of possible variables that could impact school outcomes.

School's Approach toward Improving School Outcomes: Student Academic Achievement, Student Behavior, and Student Attendance

The selected school has implemented several programs and is still adding programs to improve student achievement, behavior and attendance. The data on student test scores, student behavior and attendance seem to suggest that the programs are limited in their effectiveness (Tables 1 & 2). Consequently, it is critical to identify the key variables that impact school outcomes to ensure that appropriate programs are developed and implemented.

Several school reform efforts have failed due to inability to adequately research and conceptualize the problem (Owens and Valesky, 2007). Most schools in the rush for a quick fix, purchase packaged compact programs crafted for a different audience. No wonder the programs have limited effectiveness, and as a result the schools end up implementing one program on top of another. The entire process becomes convoluted. The teachers and students become nothing short of confused (Henig, Hula, Orr, and Pedescleaux, 1999).

In an attempt to cope with the problem of student achievement, behavior and attendance, the selected school implements the following programs:

Early Intervention Program (EIP):

The purpose of this program is to provide additional instructional support to help students who are performing below grade level to obtain the necessary academic skills to reach grade level performance. Although children start public school at a designated chronological age, they differ in individual development, ability and experience.

Star Program:

Acknowledging that reading difficulties do not just start in fifth grade, this program is designed to assist elementary students to develop strategies for reading and eventually become proficient readers.

Accelerated Reader Program:

This program is designed to improve the reading skills of students. Students are encouraged to read books appropriate for their grade level and are awarded points based on the number of questions answered correctly. This occurs primarily in school and has no parental involvement component.

After School Remediation Program:

This program is designed to provide extra tutorials to students who are struggling with math and reading. This is not a year round and it is restricted to third graders and above.

The Student Attendance Initiative:

This program is designed to facilitate student attendance. The program is structured to involve parents of children with poor school attendance in the process of identifying strategies to prevent or reduce absenteeism. Penalties are imposed through the Juvenile Court for unexcused absences.

Peer Mediation Programs:

Under this Initiative, trained students mediate conflicts between fellow students. The intent is to teach students conflict resolution skills in a non threatening environment.

Counseling Program:

This program is designed to teach at risk students new coping skills, help them process situations and identify socially acceptable ways of responding.

Since the implementation of these programs, the problem of student achievement, behavior and attendance has persisted (see Tables 2 & 3). The relevant school system has taken the initiative of including improving student-teacher relations, and increasing active parental involvements among the system goals. Some alternatives to out of school suspensions such as Saturday school, have been identified and are being implemented. The intent is to reduce absenteeism, and enable schools meet AYP in relation to attendance.

Problem Statement

It is proposed that there is a relationship among parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, motivation and selected school outcomes such as student

academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance. The present study examines the effect of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation on fifth graders' math achievement (as measured by ITBS), behavior and attendance. Document analysis will focus on record of office referrals and teacher awarded conduct grades in relation to student behavior, record of school absences and tardies in relation to student attendance, and record of fifth graders 2007 ITBS math test scores.

Research Questions

The framework for this study will include the following research questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and students' perception of parental involvement?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and students' perceptions of teacher warmth?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and students' perception of teacher practices?
4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and student motivation?
5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and students' perception of parental involvement?
6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and students' perceptions of teacher warmth?

7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and students' perceptions of teacher practices?
8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and student motivation?
9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and students' perceptions of parental involvement?
10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and students' perception of teacher warmth?
11. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and students' perception of teacher practices?
12. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and student motivation?
13. Is there a statistically significant difference in the student academic achievement mean scores by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?
14. Is there a statistically significant difference in the student behavior mean scores by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?
15. Is there a statistically significant difference in the student attendance mean scores by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?
16. Is there a statistically significant difference in the students' perceptions of

parental involvement by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

17. Is there a statistically significant difference in the students' perceptions of teacher warmth by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?
18. Is there a statistically significant difference in the students' perceptions of teacher practices by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?
19. Is there a statistically significant difference in student motivation by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

Significance of the study

School outcomes in relation to academic achievement, behavior and attendance as depicted in tables 1 and 2 continue to pose problems despite programs which are put in place to address same. It makes sense to conclude that the programs have limited effectiveness. Either the programs need to be fine tuned, discontinued or new programs need to be developed altogether. It becomes important to conduct studies like the present one to determine the critical and/or hidden variables that impact school outcomes at the selected school. The data will assist in developing relevant practices and activities to counteract the factors that negatively impact student academic performance, behavior and attendance.

The relationship between parental involvement and student achievement has been heavily researched. However, not many studies have investigated the relationship among the selected variables in a single study. Recognizing that school outcomes are impacted by multiple variables, this study seeks to add to the body of knowledge by investigating together, the selected home and school variables, and one personality characteristic in relation to identified school outcomes. Further, the expectation is that the results of the study:

- Could add to the body of knowledge in the area of parental involvement practices as it relates to student achievement, behavior and attendance.
- Could be used as a resource for data on teaching and learning. Teachers and administrators may use the data in meeting individual needs of students at the selected school. The findings could help teachers to better understand and appreciate the impact of their classroom actions/behaviors on school outcomes.
- Could inform school board members and superintendents about the importance of parental involvement initiatives in relation to identified school outcomes.
- Could be used as resource for parents who are involved in their children's education and those who remain uninvolved in the educational process of their children.

The focus of this study is to investigate the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on student

academic achievement, behavior and attendance. This interactive relationship is depicted in the following diagram:

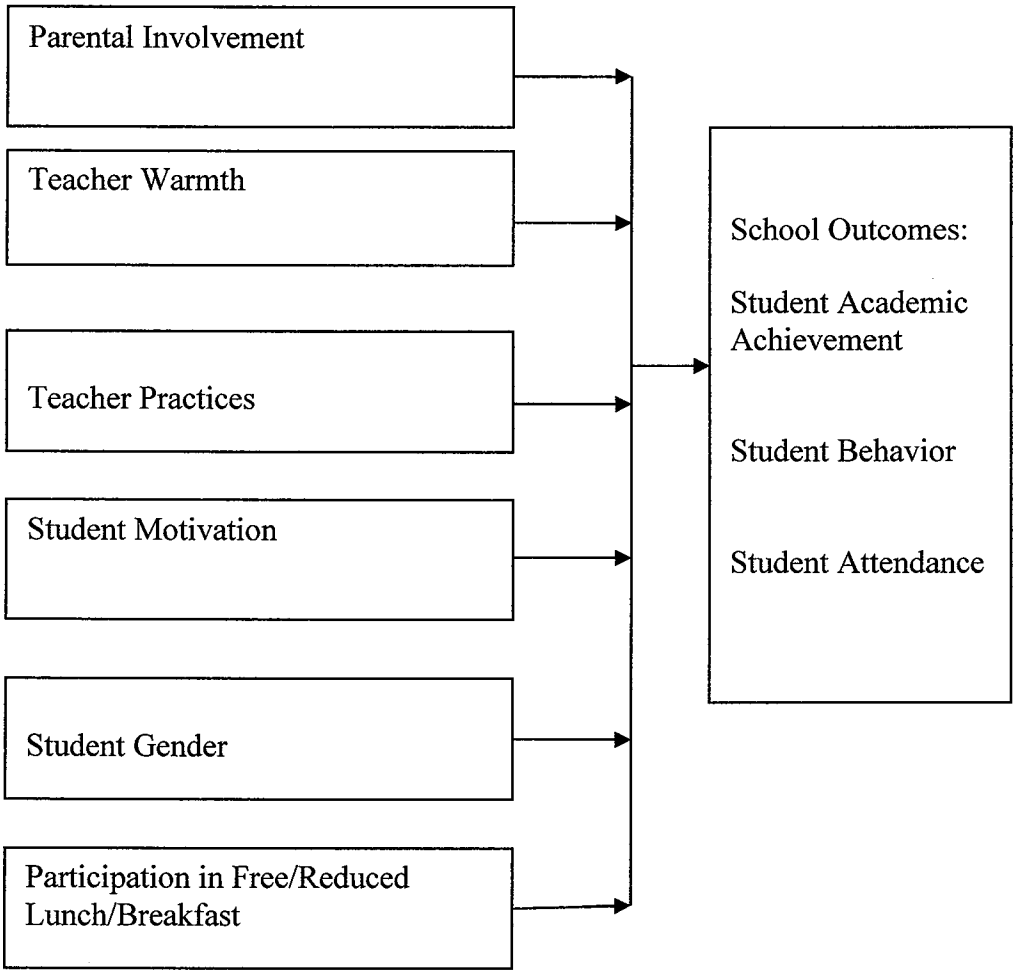

Figure 2: Student Academic Achievement, Behavior and Attendance in Relation to Parental Involvement and Other Variables.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH

The review of research is conducted under the following headings: Student Academic Achievement and Parental Involvement, Student Academic Achievement and Teacher Warmth, Student Behavior and Parental Involvement, Student Behavior and Teacher Warmth, Student Attendance and Parental Involvement, Student Attendance and Teacher Warmth, Student Academic Achievement and Motivation, Student Behavior, Student Attendance and Motivation, Student Academic Achievement and Teacher Practices, Student Behavior and Teacher Practices, Student Attendance and Teacher Practices.

Student Academic Achievement and Parental Involvement

Some studies identify parental influence as an important factor affecting student achievement, while some studies do not. Halawah (2006) investigated the effect of motivation, family environment, and student characteristics on academic achievement. The respondents were 388 high school students from Abu Dubai District, United Arab Emirates. The study did not find a significant correlation between motivation, family environment, student characteristics and academic achievement respectively. However, the findings indicate a remarkably high correlation between motivation and students' characteristics on one hand, and family environment and student characteristics on the other.

Desimone (1999) in her study compared the effects of multiple types of parent involvement across racial, ethnic and income groups to examine how alternative methods of parental involvement may be differentially effective for students from diverse family backgrounds. The study utilized data from the parent and student surveys from the restricted use panel data of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. The result of the study indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the relationship between student achievement and parent involvement according to the student's race, ethnicity and family income. Also found are differences in the relationship of parental involvement to student achievement according to the type of involvement, and whether it was reported by the student or parent.

Villas-Boas (1998) in her study investigated whether well designed home work activities can positively impact students' second language acquisition and literacy skills, and whether parental involvement in these homework activities enhance students' learning. The researcher surveyed 77 sixth graders from an urban preparatory school located in metropolitan Lisbon, and 160 students selected from nine public schools in Luxenbourg, respectively. The study found that well designed homework, coupled with parental involvement have significant effect on the performance of students learning English as a second language.

To further explore the complexity of parental involvement as a strategy for enhancing school outcomes among various racial and ethnic groups, Yan and Lin (2005) sampled 24,599 eight graders, their parents and teachers. They found that

parental involvement might be an effective way for Caucasian parents to promote their teenagers' mathematics achievement. This is particularly effective when the parents know the teenagers' schoolwork and teenagers' friends; hold high parent educational expectations, and enhance parent-teenager relationships. For African-American students, parental involvement is not such a powerful explanation as it is for other students. The implication is that some other forms of parental involvement might improve African-American students' mathematics achievement. For the Asian students, the most prominent indicators are high educational expectation and parent-teenager relationships. For the Hispanic-American students mathematical achievement is related to only one type of parent involvement: educational expectation.

Kim (2002) explored how parental involvement influence children's educational achievement in Korean-American families. The study also examined the effect of different dimensions of parental involvement on children's academic achievement. The study participants were 209 Korean-American 7th and 8th graders and their parents, residing in Los Angeles area in California. The students completed the student survey containing questions concerning family background, parental involvement, and their academic achievement. Parents completed the parent survey consisting of questions concerning their family background, acculturation levels and levels of parental involvement. The results indicate that three dimensions of parental involvement (parental expectation, parent-child communication, and home supervision) substantially impact Korean-American

children's educational success. The impact of parental expectation stands out, probably due to the traditional value of Korean society that emphasizes high expectations.

In an effort to improve mathematics instruction in schools, researchers and practitioners have examined the connections between schools, families, and communities as components of mathematics reform. Sheldon and Epstein (2005) investigated the effect of family and community partnership on students' mathematics achievement. The sample was drawn from 18 urban and rural schools in Ohio, Maryland, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Kansas and California. Half of the schools are elementary schools. The findings suggest that schools need to move beyond basic steps when they develop programs of partnership in order to affect student achievement test scores. The findings suggest that subject specific, family involvement activities will likely affect student outcomes in the targeted curricular subject.

Okpala, Okpala, & Smith (2001) in their study involving about 4,256 fourth graders in a low income county of North Carolina, investigated how parental involvement, socioeconomic status (SES) and instructional supplies expenditure impact the math achievement scores of these students. The results show that the percentage of students in free/reduced lunch programs are statistically significant in explaining the differences in mathematics achievement scores. The amount of hours of parental volunteer per 100 students, and the instructional expenditures per student are not statistically significant in explaining differences in mathematics achievement

test. This suggests that the effectiveness of parental involvement depends on type of involvement, ethnicity, family income, and home environment.

Finlely (2001) investigated parents' perceptions of efforts made by an urban school to increase parental participation in the education of children at risk for poor educational outcome. The findings suggest that low income and minority families are not ignorant of efforts made by the school to involve them in the education of their children.

Hawes and Plourde (2005) investigated the relationship between reading achievement and parental involvement for sixth grade middle school students. The study participants were forty eight sixth grade students, and their parents (all the students in the researcher's class). The participants completed parental involvement surveys. The results of the survey were compared with the students reading level as determined by the McLeod Reading Comprehension Test. The results of the study suggest a slight positive correlation between parental involvement and the reading comprehension and achievement of sixth grade students. However, the study did not find any statistically significant correlation. Hawes et al. (2005) acknowledge that the findings are inconclusive and that there is need for further research.

Fotheringham and Creal (1980) examined the relationship between family characteristics and students' academic achievement. The researchers surveyed about 3,827 children in third grade from public and private schools located in a southern Ontario county. The findings suggest that home, SES, and process characteristics account for a large percentage of the variance in reading and arithmetic scores.

Cavazos (2007) in his study, examined the perceptions of parents of at risk students about parental involvement in relation to their children's achievement. The study involved 229 parents of elementary, middle and high school students in Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District. Data was collected through parent survey which did include both qualitative and quantitative items. The findings support a relationship between parental involvement and views of student achievement. The study did not find any relationship between reported parental involvement, views of student attendance, and high school completion.

Student Academic Achievement and Teacher Warmth

Teachers are perceived by students as the primary authority figures within the academic setting. Accordingly, teachers have huge influence on students and this impact is critical. Wong, Wiest and Cusick (2002) researched the relationship between perceived teacher autonomy support, parent attachment, scholastic competence, self worth, students' motivational orientation and achievement. The participants were 226 students (6^{th} and 9^{th} graders) drawn from a large southern California school district. The findings support a link between perceived autonomy support and academically based outcomes. The study shows that the manner in which the socializing agents (teachers and parents) respond to a child's performance may be critical experiences in terms of students' perception of competence. Also critical is the degree to which personal goal setting is encouraged. Teacher/student interactions and the context (shaped by teacher practices) in which students learn are also important.

Robinson, Wilson, and Robinson (1981) investigated students' ability to perceive warmth and empathy conditions in the classroom, and whether their perceptions of the teachers' ability to provide these conditions affect student achievement. The participants were 91 sixth graders and 10 teachers in two schools in North Carolina. Robinson et al. (1981) defines warmth as the teacher's caring for the student as a person of worth. Empathy is defined as teachers' granting an understanding of the students' interpersonal communications. The findings suggest that students are able to perceive interpersonal communication skills in the classroom and that these conditions may affect cognitive growth. The study found that students who rate teachers as providing higher levels of warmth and empathy achieve significantly greater gains on achievement tests in language arts than those who perceive teachers as having lower levels of warmth and empathy.

Connor et al., (2005) assessed teacher qualification (elementary education credential, years of education and experience) and its effect on select classroom practices (warmth/responsibility, control/discipline, and time on academic tasks) in relation to students' vocabulary and early reading skills. The study found that students who have teachers that are warm and responsive, and who spend more time on academic tasks, report stronger vocabulary and decoding skills at the end of first grade. Teachers with more years of education interact better with the students. However, their students record weaker early reading skills. Additional findings indicate that home learning environment, and family SES are responsible

for most of the variability in vocabulary and early reading scores of the participants when they were fifty four months old.

In a longitudinal study involving a sample of 2,079, seven to eight graders, Epstein (1981) found that students' attitudes toward school do not directly influence standardized achievement test scores. However, achievement scores may increase over time as a result of daily successes and increased participation. She asserts that positive attitudes toward school life may influence participation by motivating students to pay attention in class, become more interested in class work, and stay in school.

In a study on the effect of students' perceived control on participation and achievement, Skinner, Wellborn, and Connell (1990) found that perceptions of teacher warmth are the only indirect measures of academic achievement. Two hundred students in grades three to six rated their teachers on degree of warmth. Teacher warmth is defined as showing positive interest in knowing more about the student and consideration of student opinions in making decisions. Measures of student behavior include teacher ratings of active participation in the class and several measures of academic achievement. The findings indicate that although perceptions of teacher warmth are significantly correlated with student engagement, warmth is not related to student achievement. Students' academic proficiency is not directly affected by perceptions of teacher warmth. However, student participation is significantly related to academic achievement.

Skinner and Belmont (1993) investigated the effects of teacher behaviors on student engagement with 144 students in grades three, four, and five. According to their model of motivation, when students' basic psychological needs (competence, autonomy, relatedness) are met by the social context of the classroom (teacher behaviors), engagement is optimized. The researchers found that teachers' involvement with students, the degree to which teachers take time for, are affectionate toward, involved and sympathetic with, and dedicate resources to their students, have a large, consistent impact on students' emotional engagement. In other words, higher degrees of perceived teacher warmth and supportiveness are linked with students' reports of feeling happier, and more enthusiastic in class. Likewise, higher levels of behavioral engagement among students (effort, attention, and persistence in learning activities) are associated with higher levels of teacher warmth, affection, and involvement. Teachers who are perceived as warm and affectionate are also rated by students as being more competent, structured and less coercive.

In a qualitative study, Kramer (1991) interviewed 31 marginal students in a racially diverse high school regarding their perceptions of the personal relationships between students and teachers. He found that personalized programs offering both cognitive and affective support increase the academic performance of previously unsuccessful minority and low socioeconomic students. The study did not find student-teacher relationships involving trust and acceptance among the marginal students. The lack of personalized relationship (teacher knowledge of students and

personal student-teacher relationships) is closely associated with a weak sense of belonging among students.

Seyfried (1998) utilizing an ecological model examined the extent to which socioeconomic status (SES) and family environment predict the academic ability of African-American preadolescent students, and the impact of locus of control and teacher perceptions of social skills on their grade point average. The sample consists of 113, fourth, fifth, and sixth graders, their parents and classroom teachers. The students were from two elementary schools in a small suburban school district near the city limits of a large Midwestern city. The findings suggest that SES and family environment are not related to ability. The researchers indicate that variables such as student perceptions of the family environment, and student aspirations may have mediated the effects of SES and family environment. However, the study supports a strong correlation between ability and teacher perceptions of social skills. This suggests that student perceptions of the student-teacher relationship as well as a measure of teacher practices may significantly predict student ability.

The relationship between perceived school warmth and students' participation in class activities, and academic achievement was examined by Voelkl (1995). About 13,121 eight graders participated in the study. The researcher found that although warmth is significantly related to academic achievement and to participation, the relationship between warmth and achievement becomes non existent after eliminating the effect of participation. The implication is that a

student who perceives the classroom or teacher as cold, non supportive and alienating may withdraw from class activities, studies, and probably school.

Bradeley (2004) examined some individual and contextual variables that impact academic success of average achieving, lower achieving, high achieving, and special education middle school students in a middle class suburb, close to a large urban center. Data was collected through a self report questionnaire. The similarities and differences in students' perceptions of parenting styles, school autonomy promotion, teacher warmth, academics, locus of control, self concept, social support from teachers, parents, and friends were analyzed to identify the critical variables across all groups. The study found that the parents' provision of less structure, warmth, and autonomy granting best explain student achievement. Higher achievement is associated with supportive parents and teachers which may relate to the nature of interaction in the home or classroom. Overall, the results suggest that students' willingness to reach out for support from an adult may be impacted by their perceptions of warmth, structure and autonomy promotion proceeding from the relevant adult.

A longitudinal study which investigated the qualities of child and teacher that predict the quality of their relationship was conducted by Wilson (2002). The sample consists of 100 seven year old children from urban, low income families. The data sources include a minimum of three follow up observations and interviews, and some school based data gathered from early childhood up to third grade. The study found teacher warmth to be the lowest among all participants.

It was also found that all black boys who have teachers very high in warmth significantly record higher academic achievement than black boys who have teachers low in warmth.

Student Behavior and Parental Involvement

Parents as children's first teachers, and primary care givers exert tremendous influence over the children. The nature of such influence impacts to a large extent the student's behavior in the school regardless of the student's age. Guepet (2002) conducted a study to determine the relationship between parental contacts and student classroom discipline. The data was collected through the use of surveys, interviews and archival information. The identified parents and teachers recorded their perceptions of their influence on student classroom behaviors. Five schools located in the southeastern states, using the same discipline plan, participated in the study. The findings indicate that parental contacts affect students' classroom behaviors. A statistically significant negative relationship exists between parental contacts and the number of office referrals. This suggests that parental contact impacts students' classroom behaviors. This study speaks to the importance of including parental contact in school discipline plans.

Jones (2004) in her study investigated the relationship among parental involvement activities, parenting styles, and performance of tenth graders. Student performance was measured by the number of student discipline referrals, and students' overall grades. Jones (2004) assessed the relationship among the number of hours that parents/primary caregivers report they spent in eight parental

involvement activities in relation to the number of student discipline referrals and student grades. The findings indicate a significant relationship between communication activities and number of student discipline referrals. A significant inverse relationship also exists between the number of student discipline referrals and student grades. Additionally, there is a significant inverse relationship between permissive style scores and student grades.

Key (2006) examined family structure (father or no father figure) as a variable in the academic grade point averages and behavior grade point averages of African-American high school students. The behavior grade point averages were measured by the students' courtesy, conduct, self improvement, and relationship with authorities and classmates. The participants include 640 students randomly selected from an inner city high school in Oakland, California. Parents of the selected students responded to 15 survey items on the High School Family Partnership Survey of Parents. This was accompanied by a fact finding sheet where parents noted family structure (presence or absence of father or father figure). The students were divided into three groups based on involved resident father/father figure, uninvolved or non resident father/father figure, involved non resident father/father figures. The study found significant differences in the academic grade point averages of the students in these three groups with the students with involved/resident fathers reporting the highest academic grade point averages. There differences in the behavior grade point averages of the three groups of students regardless of the family structure is not significant.

Student Behavior and Teacher Warmth

The ongoing low achievement and discipline issues prevalent in African-American communities underline the reasons for the study by Whitehead (2006). In this study, Whitehead (2006) examined African-American students perceptions of teachers' attitudes in relation to academic achievement and student discipline; the correlation between students' perceptions of teacher attitudes and discipline sanctions; the correlation between students' perceptions of teacher attitudes and academic achievement; the relationship between students' perceptions and socio economic status; and the relationship between students perceptions and gender.

The study sample consists of tenth graders drawn from the Educational Longitudinal Study (ELS: 2002). The findings of the study suggest that students' perceptions of teacher attitudes impact achievement and student discipline. A significant relationship exists between students' relationship with teachers, students' feelings regarding teachers' sensitivity, and reasons for attendance. The study found teachers' sensitivity to be the strongest predictor of student discipline. Additionally, the study found that lower SES students do not attend school because of teachers' expectation of success. Student gender is also significantly related to how well students get along with teachers and feelings of humiliation in class.

Abe (2004) investigated the relationship between non traditional instructional practices and curriculum content in relation to classroom behavior of African-American students between grades four to eight. The main research

question is "Do non traditional teaching practices impact discipline among African-American students, if so, how? The findings suggest that classroom environmental factors impact student behavior; relevant instructional practices lead to positive student behaviors; and engaging materials decrease inappropriate student behaviors. Abe (2004) also found that the establishment of personal teacher-student relationship is critical for effective instruction and classroom management. The findings support the position that the manner in which teachers exercise their power in the classroom can increase or decrease students' inappropriate behaviors.

Guoz (2004) explored the impact of climate variables such as teacher warmth, teacher admonishment, student relationship, class order and rule clarity, on the pro social behaviors, aggressive, victimized, delinquent and withdrawn behaviors of children in relation to school adjustment. The sample consists of 3059 middle school students from 37 classes in a rural area in northern China. Guoz (2004) found that the impact of different social behaviors on school adjustment vary significantly except for pro social behavior. The multi level results indicate that teacher warmth negatively predict aggression, withdrawal, victimization, and delinquency.

Teachers' beliefs, classroom atmosphere and student behavior were examined by Harvey, Prather, White and Hoffmeister (1968). Specifically, the researchers sought to show that teachers of concrete and abstract belief systems differ in the nature of classroom environment they create for students. The study assessed the relationship between students' performance and teachers' resourcefulness,

dictatorialness and punitiveness. The study involved 90 teachers and 118 students (kindergartners and first graders) from 18 rural and urban Colorado school districts. The teachers and students responded to teacher and student rating scales respectively. Harvey et al. (1968) found that the abstract and concrete teachers differ significantly in at least fourteen dimensions.

The study found that the abstract teachers express greater warmth to students; manifest greater perceptiveness of students' wishes and needs; are more flexible in addressing interests and needs of children; are more encouraging of individual responsibility; allow more free expression of feelings; encourage more activity; are more creative with teaching and play materials; are less rule oriented; less punitive; and place less emphasis on structure and procedure.

The findings suggest that students of more abstract teachers participate more significantly in classroom activities, are more active, and post high academic achievements than their counterparts. They are also more cooperative, helpful and less attention seeking than their peers. The study also indicates that classroom behavior of teachers and that of students are significantly correlated. Recognizing that the behavior of students impact teachers' behavior, it is clear that due to the teachers' socially prescribed power, his or her impact is greater and more pervasive than that of students.

The study by Meehan (2003) investigated the influence of the quality of teacher-student relationships on students' levels of aggression. The study sample consists of 148 second and third grade aggressive students. The hypothesis of the

study is that the students' level of aggression will be influenced in part, by the number of successive years students experience warmth and supportive relationships with the teachers. The study found that positive teacher-student relationships are most beneficial to students at greater risk for maladjustment as a result of negative parenting or belonging to the minority group. Supportive teacher-student relationship is associated with a reduction in aggressive behavior.

Student Attendance and Parental Involvement

Student attendance is critical to successful educational outcome and there are variables that could impact student attendance. The study by Norman (2005) assessed the lack of empirical data in parental/family participation and alternative secondary discipline schools. The relationship among parental participation, student achievement and student attendance was also examined. The sample consists of 200 parents of students attending ten alternative schools located in the southeast region of Texas, and ten principals. The findings show that parental involvement has a positive correlation with student achievement in both core subjects. The study also found a positive correlation between parental involvement and student attendance.

Mombourquette (2007) investigated the relationship between the type of parental involvement and high school student engagement, academic achievement, attendance, and attitude toward school. The findings did not show significant relationship between the parental involvement types and student attendance. However, the study found some relationship between some of Epstein's (2001)

types of parental involvement and the other variables under investigation. Specifically, type 3, volunteering at school has the highest negative correlation to student engagement, academic achievement, and attitude toward school. The type 4, learning at home and type 5, decision making, both have the strongest positive correlation to student engagement, academic achievement and attitude toward school. The findings suggest that the influence parents exert on adolescents at home, particularly as it relates to expectations, care and concern have the greatest impact on student performance. The results also indicate that active parent volunteering at the high schools have no positive impact on student performance, engagement and attitude toward school.

Havsy (2004) examined the influence of school climate, sense of belonging, coping, and home support on school attendance. The sample was drawn from elementary and secondary students enrolled in Check and Connect Program. This is a truancy prevention program intended to decrease absenteeism for students at risk of dropping out of school. Eligibility criteria include prior participation in interventions designed to improve attendance for about nine months. Data was obtained through surveys which also included three open ended questions. The findings suggest that home support and climate have the greatest impact on student attendance for both elementary and secondary students.

Gove (2005) in her study explored the impact of parent perceptions and expectations on student outcome. This study is guided by this research question "How do perceptions, expectations, and participation in the Bolsa Escola program,

and School Development program relate to school attendance and achievement"? The former program provides cash benefits to families in return for a minimal level of attendance. The latter program involves parents in the school management. About 1,000 matched parents and students from Salvador, Brazil, participated in the study. Data was obtained through questionnaires. The study found that the Bolsa Escola program has small impact on the attendance of lower SES families due to measurement errors. The study also found that the effects of the two programs on student achievement depend on whether students attend a high or low performing school.

Gutman, Sameroff, and Eccles (2002) examined the effects of multiple risks and positive family and social support factors on achievement related outcomes (grade point average, number of absences and achievement test scores) of African-American youth during early adolescence. The sample was drawn from the Maryland Adolescent Development In Context Study. This study involved adolescents and their families. About 837 mothers and their adolescent children (7^{th} graders) participated in the current study.

Gutman et al examined multiple risk factors including maternal depression, family income, highest occupation in the household, maternal education, marital status, number of children living in the household, family stressful events, percentage of neighborhood poverty, percentage of neighborhood female headed households, and percentage of neighborhood welfare recipients. The positive variables include (1) characteristics of the family context such as supportive,

involved parenting; (2) the availability of external support systems, as exemplified by a caring teacher; (3) the family factors including consistent discipline, decision making in the family, and parental school involvement; (4) social support factors including teacher and peer support.

The study found among other things that adolescents with higher grade point averages and fewer absences in school are more likely to have mothers who are more involved in their school and who provide consistent discipline. Further, the adolescents record lower grade point averages, more absences, and lower math achievement test scores as their exposure to risk factors increase.

Student Attendance and Teacher Warmth

Supportive teacher behaviors have been known to impact student attendance. The study by Lochner (2002) examined the impact of a positive teacher/student relationship and its contribution to increasing the habitual truant's school attendance. Lochner (2002) researched in-depth the teacher behaviors that lead to the development of a positive relationship that prevented, intervened and resolved habitual truancy. A classroom characterized by high expectation, encouragement and support positively impact student attendance and achievement. This study supports the position that positive student/teacher interaction is a key variable in meeting one of student's basic needs to ensure that the student desires to be in school and to learn. The findings of the study highlight the teachers' role in improving student attendance by providing a supportive, positive environment.

When some students perceive that teachers do not care about them and that they do not belong, they would not feel like attending school. Plavan (2004) in this study, investigated the impact of participation in school activities outside the classroom in relation to students' classroom engagement and attendance. Four at risk students participated in this study. With the assistance of staff, participants undertook daily tasks outside the classroom under the supervision of a caring teacher. The intent was to engender feelings of belongingness which in turn will reinforce participation in school, starting with attendance. The participants completed the tasks over an eight week period. Plavan (2004) found an improvement in the school attendance of all four participants. The attendance of three out of the four students continued to improve during the follow up phase.

Wilkins (2008) investigated the factors that positively impact the school attendance of four high schools students who refused to attend school in their previous schools. The four participants were in grades 8 to 11 and enrolled (at the time of the study) in a School Avoidance Program at Brookfield Park public school, located in the Northeast. The school served mostly students with disabilities.

The researcher identifies four major themes that positively impact students' school attendance: (1) school climate, (2) academic environment, (3) discipline, (4) relationships with teachers. The study suggests that a positive school climate exists when all students feel valued, desired, accepted, comfortable and safe in an environment where they are able to interact and communicate with caring, trusted people. There also exists some flexibility regarding the completion of assignments.

The students receive more one on one attention and teachers encourage collaboration among students. The teachers discipline the students fairly and not as group. The teachers are friendly and available, and the students are very comfortable with talking to the teachers inside and outside the academic contexts. Overall, the students have a sense of belonging and importance. Hence, they find school attendance desirable.

Student Academic Achievement and Motivation

It goes without saying that ability or intelligence is not the only factor that impacts academic achievement. Chan (1994) investigated the relationship among motivation, strategic learning, and reading achievement in grades 5,7, and 9. The participants include 104 fifth graders, 133 seventh graders, and 101 ninth graders (both high and low achievers). The students were from two primary and two high schools in the Hunter Region in New South Wales, Australia. The study examined the developmental pattern of attributional beliefs as it relates to efforts, ability, luck, and strategy use, and their impact on strategic learning of students as they progress from upper primary to intermediate years of high school. Elementary school children believe that they can do anything simply because they have the interest. Children's concept of ability become more differentiated with age. By the time the children reach early adolescence, they are able to fully differentiate ability from effort, and identify ability as a construct unaffected by effort.

The study found that motivational variables play a greater role than strategic learning variables in explaining reading achievement variance at the lower

grades, whereas both motivation and strategic learning variables are important at grade nine. A pattern of learned helplessness exists among the low achievers due to repeated failures. Low achieving students attribute success or failure to factors beyond their personal control, such as luck and ability. The reverse is the case with high achievers who ascribe failure or success to factors within their personal control, such as efforts and use of effective strategies. The low achievers more than the high achievers attribute success to luck, and failure to lack of ability or bad luck.

Wentzel (1994) examined students' motivation in relation to perceived quality of their relationships with parents, teachers, and peers, including the interactive or compensatory effects of multiple relationships on goals and academic interest. The study focuses on two aspects of school motivation: the social and academic goals that students strive to attain at school and their interest in academic activities. The study also examined the role of motivation in explaining links between social relationships and academic achievement. The participants include 167 sixth graders from a sixth through eighth middle school in a suburban, predominantly white middle class community. Data was obtained through questionnaires administered during regular class sessions.

The findings of the study suggest that highly motivated students are well adjusted individuals who also enjoy supportive relationships with parents, teachers and peers. The study found that family cohesion and perceived support from teachers are independent, positive predictors of interest in school. Perceived teachers' support significantly predict outcomes relating to classroom functioning,

interest in class and pursuit of goals to comply with classroom rules and norms. Further, the findings provide support for the notion that motivational processes are intrapersonal outcomes that might explain links between socialization experiences and academic achievement.

High motivation and engagement in learning positively contribute to student success. Ratcliff (2003) conducted a study to determine principals' perspectives on factors that impact student achievement. The participants include 270 randomly selected principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The participants recorded their perceptions on a questionnaire.

The intent of the study is to determine firstly, the principals' rating of fourteen factors that may influence academic achievement. Secondly, to determine if the differences in principals' ratings are related to principals' gender, ethnicity, years of experience, level of school, size of school, or socioeconomic status of school population. The study found that the factors that principals report as having the greatest influence on student achievement are competent teachers, student motivation, instructional programs, student attendance, student-teacher interactions, and positive psychological school climate.

Halawah (2006) examined the effect of motivation, family environment, and student characteristics on academic achievement. The respondents include 388 high school students from Abu Dubai District, United Arab Emirates. The study found no significant correlation between motivation, family environment, student characteristics and academic achievement respectively. However, there is a

remarkably high correlation between motivation and students' characteristics, and family environment and student characteristics.

Kone (1995) using the information integration theory, examined the relationship between ability, motivation and performance. This study indicates attempts to predict performance on the basis of ability and motivation information. The participants consist of 56 participants from Burkina Faso in West Africa. Burkina Faso, as a result of colonization has been split between the collectivists and individualist value systems. The findings of this study mirror the two value systems. With respect to 42% of the participants, increased motivation result in increased rewards when initial ability is high. With respect to the remaining 38% of the participants, the study found that regardless of the level of ability, any amount of motivation will result in a similar improvement in performance.

Higher achievement and motivation have been linked to interpersonal variables such as parent attachment/support, and teacher autonomy support. Wong, Wiest, and Cusick (2002) examined the efficacy of perceived teacher autonomy support, parent attachment, competence, and self worth as predictors of motivational orientation and achievement. The sample consists of 226, sixth and nineth graders drawn from a large southern California school district.

The data for this study was obtained through a questionnaire administered to the students. The researchers found that teacher and parent autonomy, support and perceived competence contribute significantly to an individual's motivational orientation and academic performance. The results suggest that it is important to

provide students with an environment in which their sense of competence is maintained and enhanced. The findings also provide additional evidence that attachment to parents contribute to students' motivation.

McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) investigated developmental trends in recreational and academic reading attitude in the elementary grades, and the relationship between those attitudes and the variables of reading ability, gender, and ethnicity. According to the model developed by the researchers, the social structure and environment of readers (expectations of significant others/parents and their attitudes toward reading) directly shape their beliefs and intention to read. The researchers found that recreational and academic attitudes begin at a relatively positive level in the first grade and end in relative difference in the sixth grade. They also found that increasingly negative attitude toward recreational reading is related to ability. The least able readers' attitudes decline rapidly. The findings suggest that an increasingly negative attitude toward academic reading grows regardless of readers' ability.

The achievement motivated person aims to reach a standard determined by an inner need for superior performance, and at the same time is motivated by the need for esteem, prestige, and status (McClelland, 1963). Horowitz and Mosher (1997) addressed the issues of two overlapping paradigms: achievement motivation and the modern man on Ethiopian immigrants in Israeli High Schools. The data for the study was obtained through questionnaires administered to 173 tenth grade students in four Youth Aliya boarding schools. Of the 173 participants, 85 were

veteran Israeli students, mostly of Asian-African origin, while 88 were Ethiopian immigrant students. The study found that Israeli students score higher on individualism and perception of school as an instrument for achieving personal goals and kinship values. The Ethiopian immigrants score high on level of aspiration, level of anxiety, religiousness, traditional perception of family roles and external locus of control. The findings suggest that Ethiopian students are characterized by a combination of high aspiration and strongly entrenched tradition. However, the more successful among the Ethiopians are less traditional in their outlook.

Some have argued that a student's academic reading is probably driven by a blending of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. To develop a deeper knowledge of students' motivation and its relationship to their reading performance, Unrau and Schlackman (2006) administered questionnaires to about 2000, sixth, seventh, and eighth graders in the urban middle school in Los Angles area.

The researchers found that intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and reading achievement are stronger for Asian students than for Hispanic students. Intrinsic motivation is positively related to reading achievement at a statistically significant level, whereas extrinsic motivation is negatively related. Both the intrinsic and the extrinsic motivation do not have a direct statistically significant effect on reading achievement for Hispanic students. However, intrinsic motivation seems to have a positive effect on reading achievement for Asian and Hispanic middle school students, while extrinsic motivation seems to have a negative impact on reading achievement for both groups. The researchers also found a statistically

significant decline in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation over time for Hispanic and Asian middle school students.

The effects of motivation, attitude and academic time on academic achievement in mathematics and science of eight graders was investigated by Singh, Granville, and Diak (2002). The data were obtained from the base year student file of the National Center for Education Statistics for the U.S. Department of Education. The students completed a 45 minute questionnaire that measured school related motivation, academic engagement and mathematics/science interest/attitude. The findings suggest that mathematics and science achievement among the eight graders are influenced by motivation, attitude, and academic engagement. This result is encouraging since these variables are amenable to change. School related motivation and science attitude can be impacted by more positive school experiences and better instructional methods.

It has become necessary to consider student motivation when crafting effective instructional programs. House (2003) examined the relationship between students' self beliefs and their mathematics and science achievements. The sample consists of 6,752 thirteen year old students from Hong Kong who were part of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Several measures of students' self beliefs regarding mathematics and science were utilized in the study.

The study found that students who have higher mathematics and science test scores feel that mathematics is important to everyone's life and is an easy subject. Such students enjoy learning mathematics and feel that lots of natural talent and

hard work (studying at home) are required to perform well in mathematics at school. The reverse is the case for students with lower mathematics and science test scores. Such students perceive mathematics and science as boring, and requiring a lot of notebook or textbook memorization. Similar correlations exist for both mathematics and science when analyzed by gender.

Student Attendance, Student Behavior and Motivation

Dollinger (1997) assessed factors behind excessive absenteeism by some high school students. The intent of the study is to identify school, personal, family or community variables that influence students' attendance. Data was collected from three groups of participants to allow for triangulation of data. The first group was made up of school staff and community members. Their input was helpful in the formulation of research questions. The second group consisted of 12 students who were selected due to poor school attendance. The third group was made up of students who participated in a focus group discussion. A qualitative case study approach was adopted for this study to allow for an in-dept exploration of the students regarding factors impacting school attendance. The study found among others things, that invalid or negative motivation or goals, ineffectual teachers or teaching methods, lack of parental supervision or control affect students' school attendance.

Gump (2004) examined motivation and student school attendance. The participants were 220 college students enrolled in an introductory level survey course at a Midwestern State University. The findings suggest that students are motivated

to attend class if they find the material or instructor interesting. Out of the 144 participants, 84.7% indicate that interest is a reason for attending class. About 66.7% report that they would be compelled to attend a class if they will receive credit for attendance. The findings suggest that instructors should make their classes as interesting as possible to keep students motivated to attend.

Friedman, Rodrequez and McComb (2001) investigated the reasons behind students' school attendance. About 333 undergraduate students responded to the questionnaire. The findings indicate that motivation as measured by choice, or a sense of control over one's environment, and other variables influence student attendance. The researchers found that students attend an elective class more regularly than a required class. When students pick their courses, they may be more intrinsically motivated to be present to learn what the instructor has to offer. Students were found to record few absences when they choose the course to take.

Durden and Ellis (2003) researched the impact of attendance and motivation on student performance. The participants were 252 undergraduate students. The data was collected through participants' responses on surveys. The study found that attendance and motivation have significant impact on student performance as measured by grade point average (GPA), and math/verbal scores on scholastic aptitude test (SAT).

Degelsmith (2001) examined the relationship between students' sense of belonging in school, student behavior and academic outcomes. The participants were 86 sixth graders from a suburban elementary school in Georgia. The results

of regression analysis indicate that the mix of gender, belonging, motivation (goal orientation), and engagement significantly impact student academic achievement and in school behaviors.

Martin (2002) investigated the effects of a mastery motivational climate motor skill intervention on student achievement and behavior in a naturalistic physical education setting. The participants were 57 kindergarten children. One group received a six week mastery motivation climate intervention, while the other served as the control group. All participants performed the test of gross motor development and completed the cognitive recall checklist prior to and after intervention. The researchers found that the control group showed better motor skill performance at post-intervention than pre-intervention. They performed significantly better than children in the comparison group in all evaluated areas. This study provides support that mastery motivational climate can effectively change motor skill performance patterns in children, and have positive influence on students' engagement in learning and behavior in naturalistic school settings.

Self control behavior is believed to be crucial in helping individuals reach higher or optimal goals. Self control has been identified as an exceptional characteristic associated with successful individuals; with individuals who have high cognitive, academic, and social competence; and with individuals who have positive personality characteristics. Wang, Karns and Meredith (2003) investigated the relationship among motivation, stress and self control behaviors. The study participants were 126 randomly selected Chinese children. The findings indicate that

higher levels of motivation are associated with better self control performance of children. Higher motivation produce less non compliant behaviors while high stress produce more non compliant behaviors. Girls were found to manifest less non compliant behaviors than boys. It was also found that lower levels of stress are associated with better self control behaviors of children. No significant interaction was found between the levels of motivation and the levels of stress.

Student Academic Achievement and Teacher Practices

Effective teacher practices are critical to students' academic success. Greenwood (2002) investigated the perceptions of the most and the least academically successful sixth graders regarding classroom environment, and the inherent factors that enhance or inhibit learning. The researcher found significant differences in the most and the least students' perceptions of classroom learning environment. The most successful students perceive the teachers as more trusting, supportive, and caring. This group of students believe that they have more choices in how they learned. The reverse is the case for the least successful students. They perceive the classroom as more teacher controlled and competitive. The main implications of this study include:

- Teachers need to be able to form caring, supportive relationships with all students.
- Maintain safe, non threatening environments where learning is less competitive.

- Provide students with interesting and challenging work while praising students' efforts.
- Develop a repertoire of effective instructional methods to meet the diverse learning needs of students.
- Ask and listen to students to gauge learning and understand their learning styles.

In examining the relationship between teacher instructional practices and mathematics achievement, House (2002) utilized a large national sample of students from a cross cultural setting in Asia who were part of a comprehensive international assessment. Over five thousand students participated in this study. The impact of three kinds of instructional activities (teaching strategies for new mathematics topics, homework activities, and typical classroom activities) on mathematics achievement were examined in this study.

With respect to teaching strategies for new mathematics topics, the participants reported how frequently the teachers start off by: (a) explaining the rules and definitions, (b) discussing a practical or story problem related to everyday life, (c) working together in pairs or small groups on a project, (d) having the teacher ask students to gauge their knowledge of the new topic, (e) going through the text book as the teacher is teaching the topic, and (f) attempting to solve an example related to the new topic. With respect to homework activities, the students reported how frequently the ensuing strategies were used in their mathematics classes: (a) the teacher gives students homework, (b) the students are allowed to

begin homework in class, (c) the teacher checks homework, (d) the students check each other's homework, and (e) the students discuss completed homework.

Regarding typical classroom activities, the students reported how frequently the following activities occurred in the mathematics classroom: (a) the teacher demonstrates how to solve mathematics problem, (b) the students copy notes from the board, (c) the students work on mathematics projects, (d) the students work from textbooks or worksheets on their own, (e) the students utilize computers, (f) the students draw from things that occur in everyday life in solving mathematics problems, (g) the students work together in pairs or small groups, and (h) the teacher utilizes the computer to demonstrate math concepts. Multiple regression procedures were utilized to tease out the relative impact of each instructional activity on students' mathematics test scores.

The study found that students who indicate that their teachers explain the rules and definitions more frequently are more likely to earn higher test scores. Similarly, students who more frequently attempt to solve an example relating to the new topic in their mathematics lessons are more likely to record higher test scores. Discussing a practical or story problem relating to everyday life, and having students go over the textbook while teaching occur are positively correlated with mathematics test scores when utilized frequently in mathematics lessons. The study found one significant negative correlation. Students who report that they more frequently utilize cooperative learning activities when learning new mathematics concepts are more likely to report lower test scores. When analyzed

by student gender, similar significant relationships were observed between the above noted teaching practices and students' mathematics test scores for the entire sample.

Four homework activities were found to have significant positive correlations with mathematics test scores. Students who indicate that their teachers more frequently give them homework, and students who report that their teachers check homework during their mathematics lessons tend to report higher test scores. More frequent discussions of students' completed homework are also significantly correlated to higher mathematics test scores. The same homework activities are significantly correlated with mathematics test scores when analyzed by student gender for the entire sample.

Further, the study found significant positive correlation between more frequent use of things from everyday life for solving mathematics problems and students' test scores. Students who report that their teachers more frequently demonstrate how to solve mathematics problems during mathematics lessons are likely to record higher test scores. Additionally, students working more frequently on mathematics projects, and more often working from worksheets or textbooks on their own during mathematics lessons are significantly positively correlated with mathematics test scores. The two negative correlations observed were regarding students who indicate that they more frequently utilize computers during math lessons, and that their teachers more frequently utilize computer to show new ideas in math. These students report lower test scores. When analyzed by gender, similar correlations were noted for male and female for the entire sample.

The study by Hay Mcber (2000) further added support to the perspective that teacher effects account for a large part of the variations in students' achievement. This study examined teacher effectiveness and specifically measured achievement growth over an academic year period. The start of the year and end of the year achievement data was used. About 80 schools and 170 teachers in the United Kingdom participated in the study. The study modeled teachers' impact on students' achievement growth. The findings suggest that over 30 percent of the variance in pupil progress are due to teachers. In conclusion, teacher quality and effectiveness, not classroom, school and student factors, largely impact pupil progress.

Taylor, Peterson, Pearson and Rodriquez (2002) in their study examined teacher practices observed in the classroom and their relationship to students' growth in reading achievement. The study also provided vignettes that clearly described those teacher practices in action. The study participants were drawn from eight high poverty schools. Two teachers per grade level (kindergarten through sixth) participated in the study. Eleven research based teacher practices are examined: whole group, small group, word skills, comprehension skills, low level questioning or writing about text, higher level questioning or writing about text, teacher telling, teacher using recitation, teacher coaching, students actively responding, and students passively responding.

The study found that teacher practices impact students' reading growth but some have more effect than others for the different grade levels. Active responding and small group instructions significantly impact the reading growth of first graders

and kindergartners respectively. Further, word skill and higher level questions significantly impact kindergartners, and fourth to sixth graders respectively. Teacher telling has a significant negative relationship with students' reading growth.

There is a growing emphasis on multiage education in public schools both within and outside the United States of America, particularly in primary grades. Multiage classrooms are characterized by diverse groups of students. Students with different abilities, cultures, ages and linguistic backgrounds are taught together without division into grade designations. Teaching practices and curriculum allow students to approach their individual needs and development levels. Some grade specific teachings may take place in compliance with state mandated curricula and testing (Hoffman, 2000; Hoffman, 2003). In the present study under review, Hoffman (2003) examined the instructional and organizational practices of four exemplary New Jersey teachers in multiage classrooms serving students in grades three through five. Three of the four teachers had special education backgrounds. The design of the study is qualitative case study design. Data was collected through interviews and classroom observations.

The expectation is that the data would highlight five categories during analyses. The first category relates to the importance of multiage grouping, the second relates to the teacher's role as the facilitator and social coach, the third relates to differentiated instructions which emphasize sensitivity to individual differences by modifying content, process, and product when necessary (Tomlinson,

1995), the fourth addresses socially collaborative climate in the classroom, while the fifth category focuses on flexible grouping for instructions.

The study found among other things the following commonalities among all the cases: differentiated instructions, social collaboration, flexible grouping, student interest, team teaching, a separation by grade level for one content area, and identifying the role of the teacher as a facilitator of the learning process. Further, the researchers found that teachers in this role are able to meet the varying needs of the diverse students, and deliver direct instructions to small groups or individual students. Teachers organize contents in such a manner that meaningful connections are made not just with the content areas but also with the students' lives and experiences. Instructional practices include allowing students to make content more personally meaningful by taking a concept to a different direction based on interest and learning style (Hoffman, 2003).

Tomoff (1999), investigated the relationship between teacher practices and student math test scores. The study utilized data from the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS). The classroom practices used in this study are defined as follows: (1) making and presenting projects, (2) working in groups, (3) practicing algorithms, (4) and working from a textbook. The study found a negative correlation between practicing algorithms and student achievement. Working from a textbook is positively correlated with math test scores. However, no correlation was found between frequencies of projects and group work, and problem solving or math test scores. The effects of parental education and math ability are controlled.

The relationship between instructional activities and interest in science learning for adolescent students in Japan and the United States of America was examined by House (2003). The researcher utilized data from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). The impact of two types of instructional activities (teaching activities for new science topics, and typical classroom instructional activities) were analyzed in this study. Approximately 10,052 Japanese participants (13 year olds) completed all the measures regarding typical classroom instructional activities while 10,086 Japanese participants completed all measures on activities utilized when learning new science topics. With respect to the United States of America sample, 9,916 students completed all measures on typical classroom instructional activities while 10,033 students completed all measures on activities utilized when learning new science topics.

The study found five significant correlations between teaching strategies and students' enjoyment for learning science with respect to the Japanese sample. The researcher found that students with higher levels of enjoyment for learning science indicate that their teachers more frequently explain rules and definitions and more frequently probe students' knowledge regarding the new topic. Additionally, students who indicate that they more frequently discuss a practical or story problem relating to everyday life, and more often make efforts to solve an example relating to the new topic also record higher levels of enjoyment for learning science. Similarly, students who utilize cooperative learning activities more frequently express higher levels of science enjoyment. All six teaching activities are

significantly correlated with student enjoyment for learning science for students from the United States of America.

The findings also indicate significant correlations between instructional activities and student enjoyment for science learning for both the Japanese and the American sample. In each case, more frequent use of a particular instructional activity is associated with increased student enjoyment for learning science.

Student Behavior and Teacher Practices

Teachers initiate diverse conditions in their respective classrooms and these conditions make different degrees of behavioral and academic demands on students. The extent to which classroom environment detracts or supports appropriate classroom behavior is critical. Downer, Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2007) in their study investigated the extent to which classroom environment (classroom quality and instructional contexts) and children's risk for school problems impact children's behavioral engagement. The study participants were 955 third graders in 888 different third grade classrooms. The participants were part of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development.

Specifically, this study addresses two major types of classroom conditions: overall quality of classroom interactions and the instructional contexts. The quality of classroom interactions relate to the extent that teachers provide or fail to provide social, emotional and instructional support to children. In high quality classrooms, teachers acknowledge and are sensitive to children's needs, modify lessons and

activities to meet the emotional and academic needs of students. The teachers form warm, trusting and personal relationships with students. They encourage autonomy, affirm and praise desired behaviors, and establish clear rules and instructions. Such teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and disposition required to provide students with engaging, challenging but achievable learning opportunities. The teachers are able to offer feedback grounded on the process of learning, ask open ended questions that enhance higher order thinking, and apply concepts taught in class to everyday life events.

Group format and focus of instructions are the two primary instructional contexts that may differ in relation to the kind of behaviors expected from students. The researchers acknowledge that instructional contexts vary just as teachers vary in knowledge, skills, effectiveness and values. Teachers organize students into various groups for learning within the context of the classroom (whole class, small groups, large groups, and individualized activities). Most teachers utilize a mix of group formats in delivering instructions. On the same note, teachers utilize different focus of instructions including rote, repetitive teaching of basic skills and instruction that is process oriented and focus on analytical and inferential thinking.

Downer et al. (2007) affirmed that some instructional contexts (large groups, individualized seat work, basic skills instruction) challenge children at risk of school problems by requiring that they pull from self regulatory or cognitive resources beyond their capabilities. Their inability to meet these challenges lead to inappropriate or off task behaviors. Therefore, the additional support of high

quality interactions as provided by the teacher, is important for at risk students during those challenging instructional contexts. The study found among other things that classroom environment and child attributes significantly impact students' behavioral engagement. The quality of the classroom significantly predict students' behavioral engagement regardless of the group format. Some classroom conditions were found to be more closely associated with engaged behavior than others.

Stright and Supplee (2002) investigated children's self regulatory behaviors during seat work, small group and teacher directed instruction. The sample involved third graders during math and science instructions. The study described how such classroom context challenge students' behavioral engagement in learning. The findings suggest that students are more likely to follow directions and monitor their own progress during seatwork and small group activities than during teacher directed activity. However, students are more disorganized during seatwork than during small group and teacher directed activities.

The study by Rimm-Kaufmam, Downer and Pianta (2005) addressed children's engagement, compliance and cooperation as a function of teachers' use of classroom settings, and how the classroom quality moderated the co-occurrence between teachers' choices of classroom settings and children's behavior. The study participants were 247 students and 213 teachers in 214 kindergarten classrooms across three states in the United States of America. The sample was drawn from the National Center for Early Development and Learning Study of Early Child Care (1996).

The study found among others, a consistent association between high classroom quality and a low number of problem behaviors regardless of the classroom setting. When students are required to work independently or cooperatively with peers, high quality classrooms appear to provide sufficient emotional and instructional support for the students. The students are allowed to navigate the challenges of developing self responsibility within different classroom management configurations and degrees of teacher attention (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2005).

Lane, Little, Redding-Rhodes and Welsh (2007) assessed the effectiveness of a supplemental reading intervention (Peer Assisted Learning Strategies) in increasing the early literacy skills of first graders at risk of emotional/behavioral disorders who also had co-occurring reading deficits. These research based instructional practices were implemented by general education teachers (with limited support) within the context of an inclusive classroom. The participants were seven first grade Caucasian students. None of the participants were receiving special education services or carrying any diagnosis according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

The teachers in the two selected classes paired the participants with teacher selected general education students who had typical or above average reading skills. The findings of the study suggest that general education teacher led reading interventions positively impact the reading skills and behavior of the participants in terms of academic engagement consistency.

Pianta, Payne, Cox, and Bradley (2002) conducted a study involving 223 kindergarten classrooms in three states. The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship of classroom environment to teacher, family, school characteristics and child outcomes. The study examined classroom activities, child-teacher interactions, and global classroom quality in relation to teacher, school, classroom, family characteristics and target child outcomes. The most frequently observed activities include teacher directed activity and whole group instructions. A lot of variations were noted in the occurrence of these activities in the various classrooms under observation.

The study found among other things that students' social and on task behavior and teachers' report of social and academic competence for target children are higher in higher quality classroom, even when controlling for family background factors. Global ratings of teachers' positive interactions with the target child, classroom instructional climate, and classroom child centered climate are lower in high poverty schools that have a low number of staff available to work with the students.

Student Attendance and Teacher Practices

The purpose of the study by Rocks (1980) is to determine if improving interpersonal communications among teachers and under achieving students through the use of a communications skills training model (Relationship Enhancement) would positively impact students' academic performance, classroom behavior, and school attendance. The study participants were sixty students in grades eight

through twelve, identified as low communicating under achievers. The participants were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group received training on emphatic responding, owning and expressing feelings, mode switching, facilitating and problem solving. The instructional techniques include leader instructions, skills practice, positive reinforcement, and homework assignments.

The findings suggest that the modified Relationship Enhancement training for both teachers and their low communication, under achieving students are effective in improving students' classroom behavior and school attendance. It was found that the school attendance of non trained students who are paired with trained teachers also improve.

In an attempt to identify both school and non school variables that could impact school attendance, Bishop (1982) collected data from 60 high school students in St. Vrain Valley School District. The expectation is that the findings will facilitate the development of an attendance improvement program.

The study found the following non school variables as impacting students' attendance: parental attitudes, future plans, and number of friends. The school variables indentified by majority of the participants include teacher attitudes, teacher treatment of students, and courses. The researchers note that school personnel, particularly teachers, exert a lot of influence on students' attendance. The study emphasizes the importance of teachers receiving training on techniques for establishing rapport with students.

Adler (1890) compared the attitudes toward school environment and attendance patterns of 15 to17 year olds in a competency based high school with those of their peers in a regular comprehensive high school. Both schools located in the State of California were selected due to similarities in ethnic and economic background. Student gender, grades and teacher constructs were analyzed to ascertain any differences in the attitude and attendance patterns of both groups.

The study found among other things that student in the competency based school have significantly better attendance and higher attitude scores than their peers enrolled in the regular comprehensive high school. The teacher construct made a significant difference in both student attitude and attendance. However, gender made no significant difference in either attitude or attendance. The findings suggest that better attendance and good attitudes occur when there are individualized instructions, and students are involved in the operations of the school.

Summary

School outcomes such as student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance are issues that concern students, educators, parents, and the nation in general. Reports of high academic achievement, commendable/appropriate student behavior and good/perfect attendance speak to the success and hard work of the students, the school and the parents. Data from the review of research indicate that several variables impact school outcomes. Parents are the children's first teachers, and research has shown that active parental involvement is one of the key variables that impact student achievement, behavior and attendance. The parents'

expectations, active involvement and the values they transfer to their children influence school outcomes. However, there is evidence that the effectiveness of parental involvement may be impacted by ethnicity, family income, and home environment.

Further, the research reviewed support the position that student achievement, behavior and attendance are significantly influenced by teacher warmth and practices. A student who perceives the teacher as hostile, cold and unsupportive will not be inclined to attend school, participate in learning activities or achieve. Wolfgang (1996) linked student behavior problems, achievement and attendance to teachers' classroom behavior, management styles and practices. Accordingly, teachers' relevant knowledge and the pedagogical strategies for teaching particular types of students are critical to successful outcomes (Byrne, 1993).

Motivation, interest, and engagement in learning positively impact student's academics, attendance and in school behavior. Some have argued that student motivation is influenced by student characteristics, and that school related motivation can be shaped by good school experiences, better instructional practices and supportive teacher behaviors. The current study examines the students' perceptions of parental involvement, motivation, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and their relevant influence on student academic achievement, behavior and attendance within the context of a selected school. Chapter III contains the theory upon which this study is based.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study investigates the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on student academic achievement, behavior and attendance. It is proposed that student academic achievement, behavior and attendance may be impacted by student's perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation, and that these relationships might also be explained by student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast. The variables under investigation are depicted below:

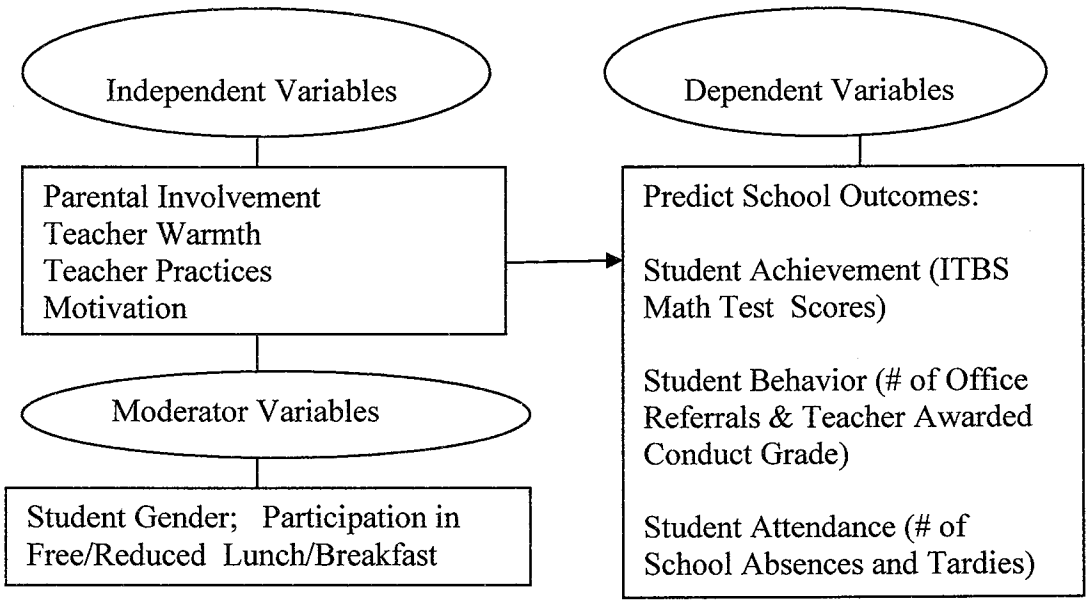

Figure 3. Theory of Student Academic Achievement, Behavior and Attendance in Relation to Parental Involvement, Teacher Warmth, Teacher Practices, Motivation and Other Moderating Variables.

Definition of Variables

Independent Variables:

Parental involvement, for the purpose of this study, refer to the extent to which the student perceives the parent as:

- Assisting with homework.
- Talking with student about school in general.
- Talking with student about books read.
- Volunteering and participating in various school activities (parent/teacher conferences, open house, career day, honors day, reading nights, curriculum nights).
- Having high expectations regarding school work/grades.
- Talking with student about behaving well in school.
- Disciplining the student for getting into trouble at school.
- Making the student to attend school unless student is sick (Halawah, 2006; Broughton, 2003).

Teacher warmth, for the purpose of this study, refer to the extent of:

- Student's feelings about getting along and being cared for by teacher.
- Student's feelings about teacher's interest in student's success.
- Student's feelings about teacher listening to what he/she has to say.
- Student's feelings about teacher being available to meet with or speak with student as needed.

- Student's feelings about teacher being approachable and student feeling comfortable in meeting with him/her (Voelkl, 1995).

Student Motivation, for the purpose of this study, refer to the extent to which:

- The student asks questions in class because he/she wants to learn new things.
- The student likes to go on to new work that is at a more difficult level.
- The student prefers to figure out the right answer by himself/herself when a mistake is made.
- The student works on problems to learn how to solve them.
- The student likes to learn things of interest on his/her own.
- The student enjoys school and thinks it is cool and interesting (Halawah, 2006).

Teacher Practices, for the purpose of this study, refer to the extent to which:

- The teacher explains things in different ways to make sure that students learn.
- The teacher makes students to work with others in small groups or in pairs.
- The teacher values and praises students' efforts and completed work.
- The teacher allows students to work on class projects based on their interests.
- The teacher connects the various subjects when he/she is teaching.
- The teacher accepts and uses students' answers to ask other questions.

- The teacher makes connections between the class topics and the students' personal experiences.
- The teacher asks students questions to see if they learned the new class Topic (House, 2002; Hoffman, 2003).

Moderator Variables:

Tuckman (1994) defined moderator variable as the variable that is measured, manipulated, or selected by the experimenter to discover whether it modifies the relationship of the independent variable to the dependent variable. In the current study, student gender, and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast are identified as moderator variables.

Student gender, for the purpose of this study, refer to male or female. Participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast, for the purpose of this study, refer to students participation in free or reduced school lunch/breakfast.

Dependent Variables:

Student achievement is the amount of knowledge that students have gained in a number of discrete subject matter areas at one or more discrete grade level (Tuckman, 1994). Student achievement, for the purpose of this study refer to:

- Student's math scores that are at 24^{th} percentile and below (1= low), between 25^{th} and 75^{th} percentile (2= average), and above 76^{th} percentile (3= high) as measured by the 2007 Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Student Behavior, for the purpose of this study, refer to the number of office referrals (1= three and above, 2= between one and two, 3= zero referrals). Also

included in the definition of student behavior is end of semester teacher awarded conduct grade (December, 2007). The grades range from 1= unsatisfactory, 2= satisfactory, and 3= excellent.

Attendance, for the purpose of this study refer to the number of days students are absent and tardy from school during the 2007-2008 school year. Students who are checked out prior to 11.00 a.m. and those that check in after 11.00 a.m. are considered absent for that day. Students who arrive at the school after 7.45 a.m. are considered tardy for that day. The number of absences range from 1= five and above, 2= one to four, 3= zero absences. The number of tardies range from 1= fifteen and above, 2= six to fourteen, and 3= zero to five tardies.

Explanation for Linkages Among Variables

It is proposed that student academic achievement, behavior and attendance will be influenced by student perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation, and that these relationships may also be explained by student gender, and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

The primary responsibility of the school is to educate students. Principals hire teachers expecting them to perform their roles of teaching students and ensuring that learning occurs. According to Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2004) teachers come to work with varying expectations, including to receive salary, work in a safe and orderly school environment, have relationships, be recognized/respected, and grow to become everything one is capable of becoming (sense of accomplishment). When the various needs are met,

the teacher is satisfied and motivated to teach and engage in practices that contribute significantly to learning. The reverse is the case if teachers' needs are not met. This is further buttressed by Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2004) which stipulates that teachers become employees of the school with expectations about their needs, motivations, and past experiences. Teacher behaviors depend to a large extent on how these expectations are met by the school.

Given that students come from varied backgrounds, they have different experiences, abilities and learning styles, and since teachers teach mostly from a scripted standard, it could cause variations in students' performance. Abstract teaching is at a higher ability level beyond the ability of low achievers. To improve the performance of a student and keep that student motivated, it is important that the teacher sets the task at a level to match the student's ability and learning style. When a task is set at a level higher than the student's ability, initially he/she will strive to complete the task but it will be an exercise in futility. Continued lack of success will cause the student to quit making effort since there is no reward or payoff for him or her (Persaud, 2004; Victor Vrooms Expectancy theory). A student comes to school expecting to learn and when that expectation is not met, the student may end up avoiding school and/or become a discipline problem.

Additional support is provided by Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory which postulates that people have a need to belong and to be recognized. The student's continued failure will ultimately affect not just his self-esteem (the way he sees himself) but also the way others perceive/see him. The student will

resort to inappropriate avoidance behaviors and end up becoming a discipline problem. It stands to reason that teacher/student interaction will be limited and sometimes confrontational. The student will begin to perceive that the teacher does not like or care about him or her.

Usually, motivated students who are engaged in learning have good school attendance and do not have discipline problems. Therefore, it is critical that teachers build positive, trusting relationships and maintain positive interactions with students. Equally important is the need for teachers to match tasks with students' ability and learning style, recognize and praise students' efforts. Further, teachers need to create opportunity for each child to succeed, as success begets success. High motivation and engagement in learning have consistently been linked to reduced school dropout rates and increased levels of student success (Kushman, Sieber, & Harold, 2000).

When parents actively support their children's education, both at home and in school, the children tend to have better educational outcomes. Everyone including the students, parents and teachers benefit (Desimone, et al., 2000). Henderson (1987) found that the more active parents are in their children's education, the more beneficial the achievement. Parental involvement in the school and learning activities might indicate that parents care, value education, and are interested in their children. The children will be inspired to attend school, behave appropriately, and learn. Involved parents become more knowledgeable about the educational process, school programs and activities, and are empowered to advocate for their children.

Supported by Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory, parents who assist their children academically gain a sense of pride when they succeed (Peterson, 1989), and are therefore motivated to be more involved in their children's education. The involved parents develop a sense of ownership (belonging) toward the school, and feel that their views are valued and recognized. The students on the other hand are inspired to learn given the positive parental influence. Parents who are not involved in school related activities or engaging in learning activities with their children, might be conveying a message to the children that education is not important. Such parents' lack of interest might discourage the children from attending school, putting forth their best effort and behaving appropriately in school. Still supported by Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory, if parents do not get satisfaction they may not be involved in their children's education since they may not see anything in it for them.

Children who are motivated tend to perform better in school than students who are not. Mitchell (1992) suggested that student motivation for learning is generally regarded as one of the most critical determinants, if not the premier determinant of the success and quality of any learning outcome.

It is proposed that teacher warmth and practices would impact school outcomes. Teachers who encourage students, listen to or show interest in students, and demonstrate care/respect for students may foster greater interest, appropriate behaviors and participation in those students. A student who perceives the

classroom as a cold, non supportive, alienating environment may disrupt or withdraw from classroom activities, and probably decrease school attendance. On the other hand, a student who feels comfortable, recognized and accepted in school, and has good interaction with the teacher may strive harder in school work, behave better, and realize greater educational gains (Goodenow, 1992).

This relationship also finds support in Skinner and Belmont's (1993) model of motivation. This model postulates that when students' basic psychological need (competence, autonomy, relatedness) are met by the social context of the classroom, engagement and learning is optimized. Consistent with the third and fourth levels of Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory, people have a need to belong, be accepted and be recognized or rewarded. The quality of student- teacher interaction contributes to the student's reality of the classroom experience.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The design of this study is ex post facto research design which utilizes purposive sampling technique to collect data on all variables under investigation to answer the research questions. This design through the utilization of purposive sampling ensures that the differences in the population of interest are identified and equally represented. To this end the sample is representative of the population from which it was drawn and the findings can be generalized to that population. This design controls for selection, history and maturation errors.

Setting and Participants

The site for the current study is an elementary school located in a school district in Metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia. Approximately 83% of the entire student body are black, 4% are white, 7% are Hispanic, 5% are multi racial and 1 % are Asian. Seventy one percent of the students participate in free or reduced lunch. The population of interest is the approximately 270 fifth grade students at the selected elementary school.

This site was chosen for this study for notable reasons. In the first instance, the researcher has served this school as the school social worker for the past three years, and has witnessed the school's struggles to improve school outcomes. Secondly, both the selected school and the receiving middle school express some concerns particularly regarding the fifth graders' academic achievement, behavior

and attendance when compared to the lower grades. The schools are interested in identifying critical variables that impact fifth graders' school outcomes.

Additionally, the fifth graders are on the verge of transitioning to middle school. The students who fail to successfully negotiate this transition may be at risk for long term negative school outcomes including poor academic achievement, anti social behavior and school drop out. For many students, school problems either begin or accelerate in early adolescence.

Gutman and Midgley (2000) found that early adolescents particularly African-American students living in poverty experience a significant decline in grade point average from fifth to sixth grade. These underscore the need to identify variables that hinder or enhance student outcomes. With such identification, appropriate interventions can be put in place to support and ensure smooth transition, and continued school success for this very vulnerable student population.

Sampling Procedure

The study participants are 150 fifth graders at the selected elementary school. In compliance with the school district's policy, the researcher obtained parental permission and students' assent prior to the students participating in the study. Given that the fifth graders have different academic abilities and come from different backgrounds, purposive sampling technique is utilized.

The researcher drew approximately the same number of participants from low, average and high achievers. This technique ensures representation of the differences in the population and therefore representative of the population from which it was drawn. Accordingly, the findings of the present study can be generalized to this particular population.

Data Collection Procedures

The data with respect to the independent and demographic variables were obtained through questionnaires administered to 150 fifth graders at the selected school on May 20 and 21, 2008. The data with respect to the three dependent variables were obtained through document analysis conducted on May 16 and 19, 2008. The data collected from the school on the dependent variables include:

- Student Achievement: The participants' 2007 ITBS Math test scores. The ITBS test scores were rated in terms of low (on/below 24th percentile), average (between 25th and 75th percentile) and high (76th percentile and above).
- Student Behavior: Number of office referrals in 2007-2008 school year (1= three and above, 2= between one and two, 3= zero referrals) and teacher awarded grade in conduct (1= unsatisfactory, 2= satisfactory, 3= excellent).
- Student Attendance: Number of absences (1= five and above, 2= one to four, 3= zero absences) and number of tardies in 2007-2008 school year (1= fifteen and above, 2= six to fourteen, and 3= zero to five tardies).

The researcher recorded each participant's dependent variable scores against the participant. To ensure confidentiality and allow the matching of individual participant's questionnaire results with his or her dependent variable scores, the researcher assigned numbers (1 to 150) to the identified participants. The number specifically assigned to a participant is also noted on the participant's questionnaire.

Upon accessing the relevant classrooms, the researcher identified the participants and administered the questionnaires with the assigned numbers. The students' questionnaires were self administered by the researcher to control teacher effect. The purpose of the study, the anonymity of responses and voluntary participation were explained to the participants. The participants completed the questionnaires individually within 10 to 12 minutes. Upon completion, the students deposited the questionnaires in a box (provided by the researcher) by the classroom door.

Instrumentation

The researcher designed a questionnaire containing 29 questions with the assistance of the academic advisor, Dr. Trevor Turner. The variables under investigation in this study are defined based on data from review of literature, and other surveys in the field of educational leadership relating to parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, student motivation, student academic achievement, behavior and attendance. Questions are developed for each aspect of the variable intended to be measured by the respondents' perceptions on the questionnaire.

The design of the questionnaire is as follows: Parental involvement, items 1-8; teacher warmth, items 9 – 13; motivation, items 14 -19; teacher practices, items 20 – 27; student demographics are measured by items 28 and 29. Items 1-27 which measure parental involvement, teacher warmth, motivation and teacher practices are answered on a 5 - point likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always).

The instrument has field validity as explained in the theoretical framework. The field is clearly mapped into measurable variables. Face validity of the items was obtained by the ratings of two professors (in the school of Educational Leadership) in terms of relevance to the respective definitions.

To further ensure reliability and validity of the self developed instrument, on May 19, 2008, the researcher administered the instrument to three randomly selected fifth grade students in the selected school: one low achiever, one average achiever and one high achiever. The intent is to determine the need for revision or deletion of any item in the questionnaire. A Reliability procedure using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was performed to validate the use of the items on the questionnaire. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients indicated for the four composite independent variables are as follows: parental involvement is .8969 (eight items); teacher warmth is .9115 (five items); motivation is .9081 (six items); teacher practices is .9523 (eight items). The details of the analysis are provided in Appendix D.

Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to analyze the data that was collected in this study. The following statistical procedures are used: means and standard deviation are conducted to demonstrate that each variable has enough variation to allow for correlation analysis. Other procedures used include Pearson Correlation analysis, Factor analysis, Regression analysis, and T-test.

The Pearson Correlation procedure tests whether there is a linear relationship between variables. Values of the correlation coefficient range from -1 to 1. The sign of the coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship and its absolute value indicates the strength, with larger absolute values indicating stronger relationships.

The T-test is used to test the difference between two means (two groups) to determine if they are significantly different. A factor analysis loads in one component or factor the variables that are highly related among themselves when interacting together, and as a set they are independent of the other components. A Regression analysis estimates which independent variable makes the most contribution or impact on the dependent variable while controlling for the other variables. The level of significance adopted for this study is the .05 alpha level.

Limitations and Scope of The Study

There are some limitations which may impact the findings:

- The school site is not randomly selected. It is selected by the researcher.
- Purposive sampling technique is utilized in this study to select 150 fifth graders attending one elementary school in a school district located in Metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia.
- Inaccurate data may be obtained regarding the number of office referrals since some teachers send students to the office for inappropriate behaviors

without the discipline referral form. Further, some teachers may refer students to the office frequently due to their lack of adequate classroom management skills.

- Although a minimum sample size of thirty is required for statistical analysis, the current 150 sample size has its limitations. A larger and more racially diverse sample will allow a more comprehensive analysis.
- The data on the independent variables represent the participants' perceptions which may be far from the truth or reality. The Researcher has no control over the participants' honesty.
- The researcher recognizes that there are other variables beyond the scope of this study which may impact school outcomes.

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on selected school outcomes such as student academic achievement, behavior and attendance. Accordingly, the data are analyzed in relation to the conceptual framework and the diagram, and in response to the research questions. The dependent variables are student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance. The three dependent variables are analyzed in terms of parental involvement, teacher warmth, motivation, teacher practices and student demographic variables. The results of Pearson Correlation, T-Test, Factor analysis and Regression analysis are presented in relation to student achievement, behavior and attendance.

Results on Pearson Correlation Analysis

Research Question:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and students' perception of parental involvement?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 3. In the table, the correlation between students academic achievement and perceived parental involvement is .443 and this is significant at the .05 level of significance (the calculated alpha is .000).

Table 3: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Academic Achievement in relation to Perceived Parental Involvement.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Achievement	.443	.000	150
Parental Involvement	.443	.000	150

Research Question:

2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and students' perceptions of teacher warmth?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 4. In the table, the correlation between student academic achievement and perceived teacher warmth is .383 and this is significant at the .05 level of significance (the calculated alpha is .000).

Table 4: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Academic Achievement in relation to Perceived Teacher Warmth.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Achievement	.383	.000	150
Teacher Warmth	.383	.000	150

Research Question:

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and students' perceptions of teacher practices?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 5. In the table, the correlation between student academic achievement and perceived teacher practices is .453 and this is significant at the .05 level of significance (the calculated alpha is .000).

Table 5: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Academic Achievement in relation to Perceived Teacher Practices.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Achievement	.453	.000	150
Teacher Practices	.453	.000	150

Research Question:

4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student academic achievement and student motivation?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 6. In the table, the correlation between student academic achievement and perceived student motivation is .475 and this is significant at the .05 level (the calculated alpha is .000).

Table 6: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Academic Achievement in relation to Motivation.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Achievement	.475	.000	150
Motivation	.475	.000	150

Research Question:

5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and students' perception of parental involvement?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 7. In the table, the correlation between student behavior and perceived parental involvement is .168 and this is significant at the .05 level of significance (calculated alpha is.040).

Table 7: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Behavior in relation to Perceived Parental Involvement.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Behavior	.168	.040	150
Parental Involvement	.168	.040	150

Research Question:

6. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and students' perceptions of teacher warmth?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 8. In the table, the negative correlation between student behavior and teacher warmth is -.026 and this is not significant at the .05 level (the calculated alpha is .749).

Table 8: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Behavior in relation to Perceived Teacher Warmth.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Behavior	-.026	.749	150
Teacher Warmth	-.026	.749	150

Research Question:

7. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and students' perceptions of teacher practices?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 9. In the table, the correlation between student behavior and perceived teacher practices is .016 and this is not significant at the .05 level of significance (the calculated alpha is .843).

Table 9: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Behavior in relation to Perceived Teacher Practices.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Behavior	.016	.843	150
Teacher Practices	.016	.843	150

Research Question:

8. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student behavior and student motivation?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 10. In the table, the correlation between students behavior and student motivation is .130 and this is not significant at the .05 level (the calculated alpha is .112).

Table 10: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Behavior in relation to Perceived Motivation.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Behavior	.130	.112	150
Motivation	.130	.112	150

Research Question:

9. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and students' perceptions of parental involvement?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 11. In the table, the correlation between student attendance and perceived parental involvement is .338 and this is significant at the .05 level of significance (the calculated alpha is .000).

Table 11: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Attendance in relation to Perceived Parental Involvement.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Attendance	.338	.000	150
Parental Involvement	.338	.000	150

Research Question:

10. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and students' perceptions of teacher warmth?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 12. In the table, the correlation between student attendance and perceived teacher warmth is .194 and this is significant at the .05 level (calculated alpha is .018).

Table 12: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Attendance in relation to Perceived Teacher Warmth.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Attendance	.194	.018	150
Teacher Warmth	.194	.018	150

Research Question:

11. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and students' perceptions of teacher practices?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 13. In the table, the correlation between student attendance and perceived teacher practices is .221 and this is significant at the .05 level (the calculated alpha is .006).

Table 13: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Attendance in relation to Perceived Teacher Practices.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Attendance	.221	.006	150
Teacher Practices	.221	.006	150

Research Question:

12. Is there a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and student motivation?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in Table 14. In the table, the correlation between student attendance and motivation is .284 and this is significant at the .05 level of significance (the calculated alpha is .000).

Table 14: Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis: Student Attendance in relation to Motivation.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance	Number of Cases
Student Attendance	.284	.000	150
Motivation	.284	.000	150

Results on T-Test

Research Question

13. Is there a significant difference in the student academic achievement mean scores by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 15. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 2.3500 and that of female students is 2.2286. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is 1.180, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .240 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student academic achievement by gender.

The mean score for students participating in free or reduced lunch/breakfast is 2.2430, while that of students not participating in free or reduced lunch or breakfast is 2.2286. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is –1.552, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .123 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student academic achievement by students' participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

Table 15: Result of T-Test: Student Academic Achievement (Math) by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast.

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores (Math)	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	T - Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tailed Sig. level
Male	80	2.3500	.65796	.07356	1.180	148	.240
Female	70	2.2286	.59397	.07099			
Yes - Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break -fast.	107	2.2430	.61185	.05915	-1.552	148	.123
No - Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break -fast.	43	2.4186	.66306	.10112			

Research Question:

14. Is there a significant difference in the student behavior mean scores by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 16. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 2.4625 and that of female students is 2.7286. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is -1.192, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .235 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student behavior by student gender.

The mean scores for students participating in free/reduced lunch/breakfast is 2.5467, while that of students who do not participate is 2.6860. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is -.564, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .574 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student behavior by students' participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

Table 16: Result of T-Test: Student Behavior by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast.

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores-Behavior	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	T - Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tailed Sig. level
Male	80	2.4625	.61508	.06877	-1.192	148	.235
Female	70	2.7286	1.88565	.22538			
Yes - Free/ Reduced Lunch/ Break-fast	107	2.5467	1.59085	.15379	-.564	148	.574
No - Free/ Reduced Lunch/ Break-fast	43	2.6860	.46321	.07064			

15. Is there a significant difference in the student attendance mean scores by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 17. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 2.3063 and that of female students is 2.2929. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is .149, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .882 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student attendance by gender.

The mean score for students participating in free or reduced lunch/breakfast is 2.3178, while that of students not participating in free or reduced lunch/ breakfast is 2.2558. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is .626, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .532 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student attendance by students' participation in free/reduced lunch or breakfast.

Table 17: Result of T-Test: Student Attendance by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast.

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores- Attend.	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	T - Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tailed Sig. level
Male	80	2.3063	.54246	.06065	.149	148	.882
Female	70	2.2929	.55490	.06632			
Yes- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break -fast.	107	2.3178	.54683	.05286	.626	148	.532
No- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break -fast	43	2.2558	.54959	.08381			

Research Question:

16. Is there a significant difference in the students' perceived parental involvement by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 18. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 3.5063 and that of female students is 3.4429. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is .656, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .513 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on parental involvement by gender.

The mean score for students participating in free or reduced lunch/breakfast is 3.4147, while that of students not participating in free or reduced lunch or breakfast is 3.6308. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is -2.051, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .042 and it is lower than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the mean scores on student perceived parental involvement by students' participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast. This suggests that students who do not participate in free/reduced lunch or breakfast reported higher parental involvement than their mates who participated in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

Table 18: Result of T-Test: Student Perceived Parental Involvement by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast.

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores-	Standard Deviation	Stand. Error of Mean	T - Value	Deg. of Freedom	Sig.
Male	80	3.5063	.53253	.05954	.656	148	.513
Female	70	3.4429	.65132	.07785			
Yes- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break –fast	107	3.4147	.56154	.05429	-2.051	148	.042
No- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break -fast	43	3.6308	.63560	.09693			

Research Question:

17. Is there a significant difference in the students' perceived teacher warmth by demographic variables: gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 19. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 3.5631 and that of female students is 3.4114. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is .926, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .356 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student attendance by gender.

The mean score for students participating in free/reduced lunch/breakfast is 3.4098, while that of students who do not participate is 3.6977. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is -1.602, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .111 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on students' perceived teacher warmth by participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

Table 19: Result of T-Test: Student Perceived Teacher Warmth by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast.

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores- (Teacher Warmth)	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	T - Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tailed Sig. level
Male	80	3.5631	.97807	.10935	.926	148	.356
Female	70	3.4114	.1.02597	.12263			
Yes- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break-fast	107	3.4098	.98255	.09499	-1.602	148	.111
No- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break-fast	43	3.6977	1.02574	.15642			

Research Question:

18. Is there a significant difference in the students' perceptions of teacher practices by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 20. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 3.0906 and that of female students is 2.9071. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is 1.390, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .167and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on teacher practices by gender.

The mean score for students participating in free/reduced lunch/breakfast is 2.9614, while that of students not participating in free or reduced lunch or breakfast is 3.1134. The t-value indicating the difference between the two means is -1.040, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .300 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on students' perceived teacher practices by participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

Table 20: Result of T-Test: Student Perceived Teacher Practices by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	T - Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tailed Sig. level
Male	80	3.0906	.76488	.08552	1.390	148	.167
Female	70	2.9071	.85170	.10180			
Yes- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break-fast	107	2.9614	.83912	.08112	-1.040	148	.300
No- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break-fast	43	3.1134	.72673	.11083			

Research Question:

19. Is there a significant difference in student motivation by demographic variables: student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 21. In the table, the mean score for the male students is 3.5667 and that of female students is 3.3667. The t-value indicating the difference between the two mean is 1.634, with degrees of freedom of 148. This difference is significant at .104 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on student motivation by gender.

The mean score for students participating in free/reduced launch/breakfast is 3.4097, while that of students who do not participate is 3.6318. The t-value indicating the difference between the two mean is -1.646, with degrees of freedom

of 148. This difference is significant at .102 and it is higher than the expected value of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores on students' motivation by students' participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

Table 21: Result of T-Test: Motivation by Student Gender and Participation in Free/Reduced Lunch/Breakfast

Gender	"N"	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean	T - Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-tailed Sig.
Male	80	3.5667	.74705	.08352	1.634	148	.104
Female	70	3.3667	.74837	.08945			
Yes- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break-fast	107	3.4097	.77712	.07513	-1.646	148	.102
No- Free/ Reduced Lunch/Break-fast	43	3.6318	.66722	.10175			

Results on Factor Analysis

Research Question:

20. What are the independent variables that are placed in the same factor as student academic achievement, behavior and attendance?

The results of factor analysis with respect to this research question are presented in table 22. In the table, the following are the loadings:

Motivation, teacher practices, teacher warmth, parental involvement and student academic achievement (math scores) are loaded in component 1. These are the variables that have the highest inter relationship among themselves, followed

by the variables in component 2 and then 3. This indicates that student academic achievement is more closely associated with student motivation, teacher practices, teacher warmth and parental involvement than with other variables. These five variables are bonded when interacting and their relationship is independent of the other variables in the other components.

Student behavior and student attendance are loaded in component 2. This indicates that the two variables are more closely associated than with student academic achievement and other variables.

Participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast and gender are loaded in component 3 indicating that the two variables are strongly associated when interacting, and their relationship is independent of the other variables in the other components. The variables in component 1 contribute the most variance, followed by those in components 2 and then 3.

Table 22: Results of Factor Analysis: Student Academic Achievement, Behavior and Attendance with Parental Involvement, Teacher Warmth, Teacher Practices, Motivation and Other Demographic Variables.

Variables	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Motivation	.853		
Teacher Practices	.834		
Teacher Warmth	.795		
Parental Involvement	.754		
Student Achievement	.643		
Student Behavior		.799	
Student Attendance		.711	
Participation in Free/ Reduced Lunch/Breakfast			.771
Gender			.644
Percentage of Variance	35.960	15.338	12.130

Results on Regression Analysis

Research Question:

21. What are the independent variable(s) that predict(s) students' academic achievement?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 23. In the table, parental involvement and teacher practices are the only two variables that explain student academic achievement with beta coefficients of .206 and .207 respectively, and these are significant at less than .05 alpha level. This suggests that schools could improve student academic achievement with effective parental involvement activities and appropriate teacher practices.

Table 23: Results on Stepwise Regression Analysis: Student Academic Achievement as Dependent Variable and Other Variables (N=150)

Model 3	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T-Value	Sig.
Constant	.269		1.682	.095
Motivation	.089	.204	1.914	.058
Parental Involvement	.098	.206	2.238	.027
Teacher Practices	.075	.207	2.132	.035
Other Independent & demographic variables were excluded.				

Adjusted R Square = .267
F Ratio = 19.095
Significant level = .000

Research Question:

22. What are the independent variable(s) that predict(s) student behavior?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 24. In the Table, parental involvement is the only variable that explains student behavior with a beta coefficient of .168. This is significant at less than .05 alpha level. It appears that the school can improve student behavior with effective parental involvement initiatives.

Table 24: Results on Stepwise Regression Analysis: Student Behavior as Dependent Variable and Other Variables (N=150)

Model 1	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T-Value	Sig.
Constant	.662		1.870	.063
Parental Involvement	.188	.168	2.069	.040
Other Independent & demographic variables were excluded.				

Adjusted R Square = .022
F Ratio = 4.279
Significant level = 040

Research Question:

23. What are the independent variable(s) that predict(s) student attendance?

The data with respect to this research question are shown in table 25. In the table parental involvement is the only variable that explains student attendance with a beta coefficient of .338, and this is significant at less than .05 alpha level.

It would appear that the select school could improve student attendance with effective parental involvement initiatives.

Table 25: Results on Stepwise Regression Analysis: Student Attendance as Dependent Variable and Other Variables (N=150)

Model 1	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T-Value	Sig.
Constant	.253		4.790	.000
Parental Involvement	.072	.338	4.371	.000
Other Independent & demographic variables were excluded.				

Dependent variable = Student Attendance
F Ratio = 19.104
Significant Level = .000

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The focus of this study is to investigate the influence of students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation on selected school outcomes such as student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance. It is proposed that student academic achievement, behavior and attendance may be impacted by students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation, and that these relationships may be explained by student gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast.

The dependent variables are student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance. The independent variables are parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and student motivation. Data for the present study was collected through a self administered 29 item questionnaire and document analysis. The 29 item instrument was administered to 150 fifth grade students attending the selected school upon obtaining appropriate approvals and consents. The data collected was analyzed at the .05 level of significance utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The current chapter presents the main findings of this research study and recommendations.

Findings

This research study provides answers to research questions that help determine the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on student academic achievement, behavior and attendance, and the effects of gender and participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast on these relationships.

The results of Pearson Correlation show a statistically significant relationship at the .05 level between two dependent variables, student academic achievement and student attendance respectively, and the four independent variables, students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation. These results provide statistical data indicating that student academic achievement and student attendance are impacted by students perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, and motivation.

The implication of these findings is that a positive change in one variable will have a ripple effect on the other variables. Accordingly, the select school can improve student academic achievement and attendance by improving parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation.

With respect to the relationship between students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, motivation, and student behavior, the results of Pearson Correlation show a significant relationship at the .05 level between student behavior and students' perceived parental involvement only. The

conclusion is that when parental involvement is high, students' appropriate behavior is high. Accordingly, the select school can improve student behavior with appropriate parental involvement practices.

The results of T-test indicate that there is no significant difference at the .05 level in student academic achievement, student behavior, student attendance, students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation by gender. The conclusion is that the male and female students did not perceive parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation differently, and there are no significant differences in their academic achievement, behavior and attendance. Accordingly, student gender did not impact or predict student academic achievement, behavior, attendance, students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation.

However, there is a significant difference at the .05 level in students' perceived parental involvement by participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast. The conclusion is that students participating in free/reduced launch/breakfast and those who do not participate perceive parental involvement differently. The students participating in free/reduced lunch/breakfast perceive the parents as being less involved while the reverse is the case for peers who do not participate in free/reduced lunch/breakfast. In other words, participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast predicts the level of parental involvement. This finding is critical given that parental involvement is a key variable that has been found to impact student academic achievement, behavior and attendance. The implication of this

finding is that the school has a greater responsibility to identify effective strategies to counteract the negative impact of participation in free lunch/breakfast to improve student academic achievement, behavior and attendance .

The results of factor analysis show that student academic achievement is loaded in component 1 with motivation, teacher practices, teacher warmth, and parental involvement. The conclusion is that these variables have the highest inter relationship among themselves, followed by the variables in component 2, and finally component 3. The four independent variables in component 1 are closely associated with the dependent variable, student academic achievement. Accordingly, the desired outcome of student achievement will be achieved when they all interact together. The select school can improve student academic achievement by improving parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation.

The other two dependent variables, student behavior and student attendance are loaded in component 2. This suggests that student behavior and student attendance are more closely associated when interacting together, and this relationship is independent of the other variables. In component 3 is loaded participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast and student gender. This suggests that the two variables are bonded and inter related when interacting together.

The results of the regression analysis show that only parental involvement and teacher practices make significant contributions at the .05 level to the outcome variable, student academic achievement. The conclusion is that parental involvement and teacher practices significantly predict student academic

achievement. The other variables made no significant contributions and are excluded. The implication is that the select school could improve student academic with high/effective parental involvement activities and appropriate teacher practices.

Parental involvement is the only variable that makes a significant contribution at the .05 level to two outcome variables, student behavior and student attendance. The other variables make no significant contributions and are excluded. The conclusion is that when parental involvement is high, student attendance and appropriate behaviors are high. By implication, the select school could improve student behavior and student attendance with high parental involvement.

Overall, the results of this study indicate a significant relationship at the .05 level between the dependent variable: student academic achievement and the four independent variables: students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation. These results are consistent with previous research studies that demonstrate significant correlation between parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, motivation and student academic achievement respectively (Norman, 2005; Greenwood, 2002; Singh et al. 2002). However, the results of the present study contradict some earlier research studies that found no significant relationship between student academic achievement, and parental involvement (Okpala, et al., 2001; Hawes and Plourd, 2005). Further, contrary to the results of this study, the research by Halawah (2006) found no

significant correlation between motivation, student characteristics, family environment and student achievement.

The present study finds a significant relationship at the .05 level between student attendance (dependent variable) and the four independent variables: students' perceived parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation. These results corroborate findings in previous research that indicate significant correlation between parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices, motivation and student attendance respectively (Gutman et al. 2002; Lochner, 2002; Rocks, 1980; Friedman et al., 2001). However, the study by Mombourquette (2007) contradicts the present result by demonstrating that parental involvement does not significantly predict student attendance.

The third dependent variable, student behavior, is significantly associated only with perceived parental involvement at the .05 level. This result supports the findings in pervious research (Guepet, 2002; Jones, 2004). Contrary to the result of this study, earlier research did identify significant correlation between teacher warmth, teacher practices, motivation and student behavior respectively (Guoz, 2004; Meyan, 2003; Downer et al., 2007; Degelsmith, 2001).

The regression analysis show that only parental involvement significantly explains the three outcome variables. However, this is with the exception of student academic achievement where teacher practices is also indicated at a significant level of .05. None of these relationships are explained by student gender. However, participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast significantly

predicts parental involvement. This result supports some previous research that indicate a significant relationship between free/reduced lunch and student achievement (Okpara et al. 2001; Broughton, 2003)

Parental involvement happens to be the critical and only independent variable that is significantly correlated with all three outcome variables (student academic achievement, student behavior and student attendance). To this end, participation in free/reduced lunch/breakfast could indirectly impact the selected school outcomes through its influence on parental involvement. Therefore, it is critical for the select school to implement strategies to counteract the negative effects of free/reduced launch/breakfast status.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this research study. The intent of the recommendations is to improve student academic achievement, behavior and attendance in the selected school.

This study finds a statistically significant relationship between students' perceived parental involvement (independent variable) and the three dependent variables: student academic achievement (as measured by the students ITBS math test scores), student behavior, and student attendance. Parental involvement is the only variable that significantly predicts student behavior at the .05 level. However, the results of the factor analysis show that student behavior and student attendance are closely associated when interacting together. These findings suggest that when parental involvement is high, student academic achievement, student behavior and

attendance are high for the fifth grade students in the select school. A significant difference exists in the perceived parental involvement of students participating in free/reduced launch/breakfast and those students who do not participate. Accordingly, participation in free/reduced launch/breakfast predict the level of parental involvement. Therefore, it is recommended that the building administrator do the following:

1. Provide parent education workshops and training for parents/guardians during the weekdays and weekends to accommodate different work schedules. The sites should include the school and other places within the local community for easy access and convenience. The workshops and trainings should explain the school's curriculum and how parents can supervise and support the children's learning at home. Information on acceptable school behaviors, discipline, tips on parenting, tips on how to assist with homework, and the importance of school attendance should form part of the content of the workshops and trainings. To encourage and boost parental participation, child care, transportation and light refreshments should be provided. Tapes or compact disc should be made available to parents who are unable to be physically present at the workshops or trainings.
2. Communication: Information on scheduled parent workshops and trainings should be provided to parents via school news letters, local radio and local televisions. Such information should also be posted in local churches, and other public places within the community. Positive communications should

be encouraged between home and school. Teachers should catch students doing something good and make good news call to parents to share the student's progress and something well done.

3. Communicate to the parents/guardians that their involvement and support make a great difference in their children's academic achievement, behavior and attendance. Emphasize that they do not need to be highly educated or have large amounts of free time for their involvement to be beneficial.
4. Recognize the contributions of parents, and treat them with dignity and respect. Identify and incorporate the knowledge that parents possess into the curricula.
5. Have parents/guardians sign informal contracts to have their children attend school except when they are sick, volunteer at least eight hours per semester in the school, and participate in at least one parent/teacher conference per semester. The time and venue for parent/teacher conferences should be flexible to accommodate parents/guardians with different work schedules.
6. Request additional funding from the business community and the local school board to acquire supplementary educational resources and books for parents/guardians, and to offset the cost of organizing the parent workshops/trainings.
7. Recognize and reward not just perfect attendance but good attendance on a weekly basis. Know the students by their first names and have a plan in place for notifying a parent/guardian when a student is absent.

8. Initiate social work referral for students with two absences or five tardies.
9. Develop and implement a non punitive school wide discipline plan. The focus should be to decrease inappropriate behaviors and increase desirable behaviors through the provision of counseling and other related services to relevant students.
10. Maintain a safe and orderly school environment.

It is recommended that the Superintendent with the local board's approval:

11. Create a cabinet level position (Director) to oversee school-home relations. This office will oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of all district level parental involvements activities. It will be the responsibility of the director of school-home relations to ensure that each school through the principal, develop a long range of parental involvement plan that will be an integral part of the local school improvement plan.
12. Provide financial and technical support to the school through this office, and assist the school in assessing the effectiveness of its plan involving parents or guardians.
13. Establish district level Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) to address policy issues and aggressively lobby school board and County Commissioners regarding the needs of parents and students. The president of the district PTA should be invited to sit in at local board meetings. This conveys to the parents that the school district values their contribution and participation in the district. The district PTA should also encourage and aggressively recruit

parents into the PTA. The activities of the local PTAs should be overseen and guided by the district PTA.

The Pearson Correlation results indicate a significant relationship at the .05 level between teacher warmth, teacher practices, motivation, parental involvement (independent variables), and the two dependent variables (student academic achievement and student attendance) respectively. Student academic achievement and student attendance are high when the variables work simultaneously. When teacher warmth, appropriate teacher practices, student motivation and parental involvement are high, student academic achievement and student attendance are high.

Accordingly it is recommended as follows:

Teachers:

14. As the most immediate classroom influence, need to know their students' background and understand the students' different learning styles, abilities and unique personalities. Teachers can mitigate these differences by utilizing innovative curriculum and instructional practices that will enable all students to learn. To further facilitate teachers' understanding of their students, classroom activities should be designed to provide students and teachers with more opportunities to discuss their backgrounds and interests. Such activities may include daily or weekly discussions, family interviews, reflective journals, taped student dialogues or other assignments relating to personal histories and experiences.

15. Should consider meeting with individual students at least once a week to set and review academic and non academic goals. The intent is to enhance teacher availability/approachability, build respectful and trusting student-teacher relationships, while promoting open communication, student achievement, and school attendance.
16. Should promote conditions of acceptance, care and tolerance in the classroom. This can be achieved through quality lesson planning and delivery of instructions. This will provide opportunities for praising students as well as facilitate successful completion of assigned tasks. Efforts should be made to create opportunities for each student to experience success given that success begets success.
17. Should display students' completed works as this conveys to the students that their work is valued and appreciated.
18. Should create opportunities for students to work together in pairs or small groups on problems or projects to enhance/reinforce learning.
19. Should organize contents so that meaningful connections are made among the content areas, and as much as possible with students' experiences.
20. Should utilize the interest of students to generate interests in attending school and learning. Opportunities for meaningful student choice should be included in the curriculum and entire school day to enhance motivation, interest in learning and school attendance.

21. Should provide interactive mathematics homework for students to complete with parents or guardians.

Building Administrators need to:

22. Supervise, support and work collaboratively with teachers regarding the above stated practices (recommendations 14 to 21) to ensure high student academic achievement, behavior and attendance.
23. Ensure during supervisory process that teachers are exposed to quality lesson planning and methodologies that align or adjust the curriculum to students' unique learning needs.
24. Provide ongoing staff development activities that will expose teachers to innovative instructional practices and effective classroom management techniques. Such staff development activities should give teachers the capability to meet students' different learning needs to ensure that no child is left behind. The content of the staff development activities should include but not limited to the following:

- How to effectively instruct students with different abilities and learning styles.
- How to integrate the various subjects, make connections between them and students' experiences as much as possible.
- How to demonstrate acceptance for students' answers and use their answers to ask other questions.
- How to create and maintain varied and fluid groups for instructions.

A follow up plan should be in place to assess overall effectiveness of staff development activities. Ongoing professional development in which teachers work together within buildings to reflect on their practice is one important piece of the total package that is needed to ensure that "no child is left behind" (Bush, 2001).

25. Provide extra tutorial classes in mathematics to students before and after school hours throughout the school year and over the summer holidays.
26. Disseminate information to parents and students on the place of mathematics and its relevance to high paying careers and everyday life.
27. Create in partnership with other local organizations/colleges, role models in entertainment/sporting industry which embody values of mathematics.
28. Continue with recommendations 1 through 10.

Recommendations For Further Research

Future researchers should:

1. Collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data to corroborate or disconfirm the findings of this study.
2. Replicate this study with several schools in this school district. By so doing, broader generalizations of the findings could occur.
3. Identify specific types of parental involvement and teacher practices that are most effective with this population.
4. Utilize additional measures of student academic achievement.

5. Utilize additional or other measures of socioeconomic status such as parent occupation or education.

APPENDIX A

STUDENT ASSENT FORM

Dear Prospective Participant:

My name is Maureen C. Egbuna and I am a graduate student at Clark Atlanta University. I am pursing my doctorate degree in Educational Leadership and I am in the process of writing my dissertation. My dissertation topic is "An analysis of the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on selected school outcomes."

Therefore, I am interested in your responses from a purely research basis. There is no wrong or right answer. Your report will be treated anonymously, and no student will be identified. You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty. Participation in this study will not affect your grades or placement. The findings are expected to provide recommendations for improvement in the selected school. Hence, it is important that you complete the questionnaire and please respond to all the items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire will take between 10 to 12 minutes to complete.

I greatly appreciate your consideration and assistance in taking the time to complete the attached questionnaire. Please feel free to contact me at 678-549-1564 should you have any questions.

Mrs. Maureen Egbuna
Clark Atlanta University,
Atlanta, Georgia

APPENDIX B

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION FORM

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

I am a graduate student at Clark Atlanta University. I am conducting a research study entitled "An analysis of the impact of students' perceptions of parental involvement, teacher warmth, teacher practices and motivation on selected school outcomes." Your child(ren) has been asked to participate in the study and I am interested in the responses of your child(ren) from a purely research basis. The report will be treated anonymously, and no student will be identified. Participation in this study is voluntary, and will not affect your child(ren)'s grades or placement. The findings will provide recommendations for improving the school. Hence, it is important that your child(ren) participate. I will greatly appreciate your consideration and support. Please check the box below to indicate your consent for your child to participate in the study or otherwise.

_____ Yes, I give my child(ren) permission to participate in the study.

_____

_____

_____

_____ No, I do not give my child(ren) permission to participate in the study.

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Parent Signature Date

Please feel free to contact me at 678-549-1564 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Maureen Egbuna
Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia

APPENDIX C

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please use the following scale to check your responses

1= Never 2= Rarely 3= Sometimes 4= Often 5= Always

01	My parent(s) or guardian assists me with my homework.	1	2	3	4	5
02	My parent(s) or guardian talks with me about school in general.	1	2	3	4	5
03	My parent(s) or guardian talks to me about books I have read.	1	2	3	4	5
04	My parent(s) or guardian volunteers and/or participates in various school activities (open house, career day, honors day, reading nights, curriculum nights, parent/teacher conferences, parent/teacher association-PTA).	1	2	3	4	5
05	M y parent(s) or guardian has high expectations regarding my school work and grades.	1	2	3	4	5
06	My parent(s) or guardian talks to me about behaving well in school?	1	2	3	4	5
07	My parent(s) or guardian disciplines me when I get into trouble at school?	1	2	3	4	5
08	My parent(s) or guardian makes me attend school unless I am sick.	1	2	3	4	5
09	I feel that I get along with my teacher and my teacher cares about me.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I feel my teacher is interested in my success.	1	2	3	4	5
11	My teacher listens to what I have to say.	1	2	3	4	5
12	My teacher is available to meet with or speak with me as needed.	1	2	3	4	5
13	My teacher is approachable and I feel comfortable in meeting with him or her.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I ask questions in class because I want to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I like to go on to new work that is at a more difficult level.	1	2	3	4	5
16	When I make a mistake, I prefer to figure out the right answer by myself.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I work on problems to learn how to solve them.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I like to learn things on my own that interest me.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I enjoy school, I think it is cool and interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
20	My teacher explains things in different ways to make sure I learn.	1	2	3	4	5
21	My teacher makes me work with others in small groups or in pairs.	1	2	3	4	5
22	My teacher values and praises my efforts and completed work.	1	2	3	4	5

23	My teacher allows me to work on a class project based on my interest.	1	2	3	4	5
24	My teacher connects the various subjects when he/she is teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
25	My teacher accepts and uses my answers to ask other questions.	1	2	3	4	5
26	My teacher makes connections between the class topics and my personal experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
27	My teacher asks me questions to see if I learned the new class topic.	1	2	3	4	5

Demographic Data: Please select the Appropriate Box:

28. **Gender:**

(1) Male (2) Female

29. **Do you participate in Free or Reduced lunch/breakfast.**

(1) _____Yes (2) _____No

APPENDIX D

RESULT OF RELIABILITY ANALYSIS (PILOT STUDY)

QUESTIONS		SCALE
My parent(s) or guardian assists me with my homework.		.8881
My parent(s) or guardian talks with me about school in general.		.8517
My parent(s) or guardian talks to me about books I have read.		.8843
My parent(s) or guardian volunteers and/or participates in various school activities (open house, career day, honors day, reading nights, curriculum nights, parent/teacher conferences, PTA).		.9048
M y parent(s) or guardian has high expectations regarding my school work and grades.		.8989
My parent(s) or guardian talks to me about behaving well in school.		.9119
My parent(s) or guardian disciplines me when I get into trouble at school.		.8637
My parent(s) or guardian makes me attend school unless I am sick		.8517
Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient- Total items 8		**.8969 Parental Involvement**
I feel that I get along with my teacher and my teacher cares about me.		.8395
I feel my teacher is interested in my success.		.8584
My teacher listens to what I have to say.		.9191
My teacher is available to meet with or speak with me as needed.		.9191
My teacher is approachable and I feel comfortable in meeting with him or her.		.9009
Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient- Total items 5		**.9115 Teacher Warmth**
I ask questions in class because I want to learn new things.		.9522
I like to go on to new work that is at a more difficult level.		.5610
When I make a mistake, I prefer to figure out the right answer by myself.		.9449
I work on problems to learn how to solve them.		.5544
I like to learn things on my own that interest me.		.5544
I enjoy school, I think it is cool and interesting.		.7825
Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient- Total items 6		**.9081 Motivation**

My teacher explains things in different ways to make sure I learn.		.7963
My teacher makes me work with others in small groups or in pairs.		.8660
My teacher values and praises my efforts and completed work.		.9843
My teacher allows me to work on a class project based on my interest.		.5960
My teacher connects the various subjects when he/she is teaching.		.9820
My teacher accepts and uses my answers to ask other questions.		.9799
My teacher makes connections between the class topics and my personal experiences.		.9820
My teacher asks me questions to see if I learned the new class topic.		.9820
Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient- Total items 8		**.9532 Teacher Practices**

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